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DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO
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THE BOOK
OF
COMMON PRAYER,
AND ADMINISTRATION OF
THE SACRAMENTS,
AND OTHER RITES AND CEREMONIES
OF
THE CHURCH,
ACCORDING TO THE USE OF
The United Church of England and Ireland:
TOGETHER WITH
THE PSALTER OR PSALMS OF DAVID,
POINTED AS THEY ARE TO BE SUNG OR SAID IN CHURCHES;
AND THE
FORM AND MANNER OF MAKING, ORDAINING, AND CONSECRATING
OF
BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS:
WITH NOTES
EXPLANATORY, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL,
FROM APPROVED WRITERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,
SELECTED AND ARRANGED
BY THE REVEREND RICHARD MANT, D.D.
EDITOR OF ST. ROTO, PH.S. BISHOPSGATE, AND OF EAST MORSLEY, SURREY; AND CHAPLAIN TO
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THE ORDER FOR

MORNING PRAYER,

DAILY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

¶ *At the beginning of Morning Prayer*[a] *the Minister shall read with a loud voice*[b] *some one or more of these Sentences of the Scriptures that follow. And then he shall say that which is written after the said Sentences*[c].

WHEN the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezekiel* xviii. 27.

[a] *At the beginning of Morning Prayer* &c.] Prayer is the lifting up of the soul to converse with God, and a means of obtaining all blessings. It is an high honour to us, and a great advantage: but it is at the same time difficult to be performed, requiring so much attention and serenity of mind, that it can never be well done without some preceding preparation: for which reason when the Jews enter into their synagogues to pray, they stand silent for some time, and meditate before whom they stand; and the Christian priests, in the primitive ages, prepared the people's hearts to prayer by a devout preface. In imitation whereof we now use the Sentences of holy Scripture, which are all of them chosen to be admonitions to repentance, since nothing makes us more unfit to pray, or unlikely to be heard, than sin unrepented of, Ps. lxvi. 18; John ix. 31. And being gathered out of the sacred text, the Church hopes we will not dare to disobey them, as coming from the mouth of that God, to whom we address ourselves in our prayers, and who may justly reject our petition, if we hearken not to his commandments.

As for the particular Sentences, the reverend composers of our Liturgy have been curious and exact in the choice of them, selecting divers of the plainest and properest places, to bring all sorts of sinners to repentance. There are variety of dispositions, and the same man is not always in the same temper; wherefore they have collected many, and left it to the discretion of him that ministers, to use such of them every day, as best suit with his own and his people's circumstances.

And from these Sentences those who come, as all ought to do, before prayers begin, may find a meditation fitted for their present frame of spirit.

The first rank may consist of those Sentences, which contain support for the fearful, and are designed to prevent that excessive dread of God's wrath, which hinders the exercise of devotion by too much dejecting the spirits. Such persons may be taught by David and Jeremiah not to run from the Almighty, but to pray to him more humbly and earnestly. Ps. li. 9; cxliii. 2; Jer. x. 24.

2. Not much unlike is the case of those who doubt of God's favour, and in despair look upon him as irreconcileable. To strengthen their faith in God's mercy the Church provides three sentences for them; the first to shew, how fit they are to ask pardon; the other two to declare how likely God is to grant it on their repentance. Ps. li. 17; Dan. ix. 9; Luke xv. 18, 19.

3. For the information of the ignorant, who know not how to make these penitential addresses, as being sensible neither of their guilt nor of their danger, because they think either that they have no sin, or that a slight repentance will procure pardon for it, the two following sentences are provided, 1 John i. 8, 9; Ezek. xviii. 27.

4. Others there are, who are not ignorant, but negligent; and, though they know they are daily sinning, and cannot be saved without repentance, yet defer this duty from day to day. On these the Church calls in the two following sentences, Ps. li. 3; Matt. iii. 2.

Lastly, those, who by custom grow cold and formal, confessing their sins with external reverence only, without any sincere devotion, are presented by the Church with that direction and reproof, which God gave the hypocritical Jews, Joel ii. 13. *Dean Comber.*

Thus we see how wisely and effectually the Church prepares the way to the throne of grace for the various descriptions of character, which may be supposed to assemble within her courts for the purposes of devotion. Let us learn to be thankful for these encouragements, admonitions, and instructions: and may it be our earnest desire so to use the ordinances of God's house as not to abuse them; that we may find them our support through life, and as waters of consolation in the day of adversity. *Rogers.*

Nothing can so effectually awaken us to a pious frame of soul, as the words of God speaking to us. Our ser-

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. *Psalm* li. 3.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. *Psalm* li. 9.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart,

---

vice therefore begins, as did that of the primitive church, with a preface, to dispose the minds of the congregation to a reverent performance of the duty, on which they are entering: according to that precept of the Son of Sirach, "Before thou prayest, prepare thyself," Ecclus. xviii. 23. This preface is composed of Sentences of Scripture, with an Exhortation grounded upon them. The Sentences are very prudently selected. They all relate to repentance and confession of sins, which naturally stands first in the devotions of guilty creatures, as we all are. Till we feel a genuine sorrow for having offended God, and come to intreat earnestly the pardon which is offered us through Christ, he cannot accept us; and when we do, that will qualify us for every other part of his worship.

In these texts we are plainly taught the nature of true penitence: that the "wicked must" both "turn away from his wickedness, and do that," which the law enjoins as "right, to save his soul alive:" that we must not only "acknowledge our transgressions" with our tongues, but have them "ever before" the eyes of our minds, to keep us humble and cautious: on which we may pray, in faith of being heard, that God will treat us with the same kindness, as if he "hid his face from" seeing "our sins," or "blotted" them "out" from his memory: that he requires from us, neither the fanciful "sacrifices" of superstition, nor the expensive ones of the "Mosaick" dispensation; but that of "a spirit contrite" with filial sorrow, and "broken" to universal obedience: not outward expressions of vehement passion, as "rending the garments," but a "heart" rent and penetrated with a just sense of what we have done amiss: that on such a change within we shall find him, not only "slow to anger" for what is past, and "ready to repent him of the evil" which he was bringing upon us, but bountiful and gracious for the time to come; "though we have" deliberately "rebelled against him" heretofore, and still too often inconsiderately neglected to "obey his voice, and walk in his laws:" that we have cause to be willing and even desirous, that he should "correct" us, when he sees it expedient; but to beg he would do it "with" that mild and merciful "judgment," which he exercises towards his children, "not with anger," as his enemies, which would "bring us" to final destruction: that repentance is absolutely and immediately necessary for us; for "the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the hour, when we shall, each of us, be admitted into it or excluded out of it for ever, draws very near, and how near we know not: that therefore we must resolve to "arise and go to our heavenly Father" without delay, and acknowledge our unworthiness "to be called his sons:" that whatever we may be in our own eyes, or the opinion of our fellow-creatures, were we to undergo a human trial only; yet if God "enter into judgment with us, in his sight shall no man living be justified:" that therefore to extenuate our faults, and "say" or imagine, "that we have no sin," or but little, would be a fatal "self-deceit," and a proof against us, that we know not, or own not, the "truth" of our case: but if we honestly recall to ourselves, and confess to God the errors of our past life, not only his mercy, but his "faithfulness and justice" to his promises will induce him both to "forgive us" the guilt of "our sins," and "to cleanse us from" the defilement, and deliver us from the dominion, of "all unrighteousness."

It is true, but few of the Sentences are usually read at the same time: but it will be very beneficial for such as come soon enough, to meditate on them all before the service begins. *Abp. Secker.*

The first book of King Edward begins with the Lord's prayer. But, when a review was taken of it afterwards, and alterations were made in it, the beginning was thought too abrupt, and these Sentences were therefore prefixed with the following Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution, as a proper introduction to prepare the congregation for the duty on which they were entering. *Wheatly.*

As soon as the minister begins these Sentences, it is usual for the congregation to stand up: a very decent and proper custom, if we consider the true meaning and intent of it; which is to shew our reverence for the word of God, now rehearsed to us, in order to awaken us to repentance. *Waldo.*

[b] —*the minister shall read with a loud voice*] That is, with a clear, distinct, and audible voice: the word "loud" not signifying that it should be any way strained, or kept up beyond its strength; but that it should be raised and adapted to such an extended elevation, above the ordinary course of reading, as he shall feel to be most agreeable to himself, in order to make it the more edifying to his congregation. *Collis.*

As it is the duty of the clergy to remember, what a solemn action they are now about to join in with their respective congregations; and accordingly to read these Sentences with a suitable gravity, with a demeanour expressive of their inward devotion, with attention, and deliberation, and such a tone of voice, as may influence their people, and quicken their zeal, and tend to excite in them those heavenly affections, which are requisite in prayer: so also it is the duty of the congregations to consider, that, during the reading of these Sentences and the following Exhortation, they must not think themselves at liberty to be idle, as if they had nothing to regard, whilst the minister is reading. They are certainly obliged to bestow that time after a quite different manner; to give a reverent attention to what the minister reads; to hear the voice of God speaking to them in the Sentences, and the voice of his ambassador speaking to them in the Exhortation; and thereby to fit and prepare their hearts for making their addresses to God himself in the Church's Confession. And to the end that they may not lose an opportunity of so doing, let them come to church in good time, that they may be present at the very beginning of the Office. And when

O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psalm* li. 17.

Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Joel* ii. 13.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us. *Daniel* ix. 9, 10.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. *Jer.* x. 24. *Psalm* vi. 1.

Repent ye; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. *St. Matth.* iii. 2.

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *St. Luke* xv. 18, 19.

Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalm* cxliii. 2.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves; and the truth is not in us: but, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 *St. John* i. 8, 9.

DEARLY beloved brethren[d], the Scripture moveth us[e] in sundry places to acknowledge and con- Phil. iv. 1. 2 Cor. vii. 1. viii. 1. Gal. iii. 15. 1 Thes. iv. 1.

they first come to their respective places, let them by some short prayer beg God's special assistance, that they may discharge their duty as they ought, and offer an acceptable sacrifice to him. Let the intermediate space also, between their short private prayer, and the minister's beginning to read, be spent, not in talking or gazing, but in reading or meditation; that they may bring themselves to a devout frame of mind by the time that the minister begins, and may be the better able to go through the whole office in such a manner as God expects from them. *Dr. Bennet.*

[c] *And then he shall say that which is written after the said Sentences.*] The service of the Church of England always begins with one or more sentences of Scripture: the Exhortation, which follows, is but little more than a sort of comment or paraphrase on the several texts which are ordered to be read. *Veneer.*

[d] *Dearly beloved brethren*, &c.] To the foregoing Sentences of God's word the Church hath annexed a pertinent Exhortation: which is designed both to apply and set home the preceding Sentences, and to direct us how we ought to perform the following Confession. It collects the necessity of this duty from the word of God; and, when it hath convinced us that we must do it, it instructs us in the right manner, and gives us the reason why we must confess and repent just now; and then it invites us to that necessary duty for which it hath so well prepared us. So that it connects the Sentences and the Confession; making the former so useful in order to the latter, that whoever hears them, and considers the inferences here made, cannot but be properly disposed for a true confession. And, though neither the Roman nor Greek Offices have any such form in this place, yet the pertinency and usefulness thereof will shew, that our prudent and pious Reformers have every where contrived, that the people might perform each part of the Office with the spirit, and with the understanding also. *Dean Comber.*

This Exhortation demands our most serious attention: though there is reason to fear, that too often it is little, if at all, attended to, but looked upon as a mere matter of form, not deserving our notice. But, if we will only consider the excellent instruction which it contains, we shall surely think otherwise; and both silently and attentively hearken to this useful and seasonable introduction to the service of the Church. *Waldo.*

The minister begins his admonition with the apostolical salutation, "Dearly beloved brethren," Phil. iv. 1. *Dean Comber.* And it appears from several passages, that this beginning is very agreeable to the style of the New Testament. St. Paul, 2 Cor. vii. 1, expresses himself thus; "having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," &c.: and in the next chapter, ver. 1, he calls the Corinthians his brethren, as he doth the Galatians, Gal. iii. 15; and the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. iv. 1. In short, nothing is more commonly to be met with than these appellations, "Beloved" and "Brethren," throughout St. Paul's, St. James's, St. Peter's, and St. John's Epistles. *Veneer.*

These first words of the Exhortation express very strongly and properly the good will and tender regard, which the ministers of God's word should have for their people; who should in return receive their admonitions

Nehem. i. 6. Ps. xxxviii. 18. Is. i. 16, 17. Lam. iii. 40, 41. Acts xvii. 30. 1 John i. 8, 9. Prov. xxviii. 13. Job xi. 7.

fess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them[f] before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness[g] of the same, by

Matth. vi. 14. Job xlii. 6. Luke xviii. 13. Ps. li. 17. Jonah iii. 10. John v. 14. Ezek. xviii. 27. Acts xx. 21.

meekly and thankfully, since they "speak" to them "the truth in love." Eph. iv. 15. *Abp. Secker.*

After this kind and affectionate address, the Exhortation proceeds, comprehending these several heads: 1. The matter of the Exhortation, namely, a call to confession, in these words; "The Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness." Secondly, A caution against cloking and concealing them, in these words; "And that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father." Thirdly, The manner and qualifications of true confession, in these words; "but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart." Fourthly, The end and design of confession, in these words; "to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy." Fifthly, The time or seasons of confession, which the next words tell us, must be in general, "at all times;" but more especially, "when we assemble and meet together," for the ends after mentioned. And lastly, the conclusion, in these words, "Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me." *Dr. Hole.*

[e] —*the Scripture moveth us* &c.] That the Scripture doth move us, as here affirmed, appears from the introductory sentences, particularly from 1 John i. 8, 9. *Veneer.* Many other passages might be cited to this purpose; two or three of the most remarkable are Ps. xxxii. 5; Prov. xxviii. 13; 1 John i. 8, 9. Besides these passages many others occur throughout the Bible, strongly inforcing the necessity of humiliation and confession, as well as many striking instances of the due performance of these duties; as may be seen in 1 Kings viii. 46, &c.; Ezra ix. 6, &c.; Nehem. i. 5, &c.; the latter part of the book of Job; the penitential psalms of David, particularly the 51st.; Is. lxiv. 6; and sundry passages in the writings of the prophets. *Waldo.* To add weight to his exhortation the minister intimates, that it is not he only, but God himself, who moveth his people to repentance, so that he who refuseth, refuseth not man but God. *Dean Comber.*

[f] —*that we should not dissemble nor cloke them* &c.] Since all our sins are known to Almighty God, who understands our thoughts, words, and works, it is but folly to "dissemble" our guilt by feigned excuses, as Saul and Ananias, 1 Sam. xv. 15; Acts v. 2, 8; and impudence to "cloke" and cover it with false denials, as Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 25: for "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper," Prov. xxviii. 13. Though we could deny our faults so confidently, or dissemble them so cunningly, as to deceive all the world, we cannot conceal them from him, who will find us out and will condemn us for the transgression and the hypocrisy also. The Scripture therefore teaches us a wiser way, namely, "to confess them;" shewing us withal what frame of spirit we must put on when we do confess. For we must have, first, "an humble and lowly" heart, truly sensible of our own vileness by sin, and judging ourselves unworthy to lift up our eyes to heaven, Job xlii. 6; Luke xviii. 13. Secondly, "A penitent" heart full of sorrow, and indignation against ourselves, for offending so good a God, and thereby being in danger, not only to lose endless joys, but to fall into eternal misery, for short and empty pleasures, Matt. xxvi. 75. And this will produce, thirdly, "an obedient heart," and make us firmly resolve, and earnestly endeavour, to keep God's commandments better hereafter, John v. 14. *Dean Comber.*

It is to no purpose to confess our sins, unless we resolve to forsake them, and to obey those laws of God, which we have formerly transgressed. Thus much is intimated by the word "obedient:" for an "obedient heart" in this place signifies a heart that hath given itself up to the service of God, and is convinced that a profession of repentance without reformation is an insult upon God and an instance of the vilest hypocrisy. "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13. *Veneer.*

A moment's serious reflexion on our manifold sins and wickedness can scarcely fail to convince us of the real excellence and propriety of this part of the Exhortation. Have we not in many instances neglected God, and wilfully transgressed against him? Have not our sins been attended with many, and almost unpardonable aggravations? What then can more become us, than humility and lowliness of mind? Without doubt a penitent and obedient heart is the very offering we ought to bring, when we would approach God's footstool. And this disposition is our preparation under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit for the reception of his mercy and forgiveness. *Rogers.*

[g] —*to the end that we may obtain forgiveness* &c.] To encourage us to confess our sins in the manner just mentioned, we are told in the following sentence, that the Scripture hath promised us forgiveness upon true repentance; which comfortable doctrine is supported by a representation of the infinite goodness and mercy of God. "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed," saith the prophet Ezekiel, "and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive," Ezek. xviii. 27. And St. Paul declares, that he had "testified both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts xx. 21. *Veneer.*

God in his "infinite goodness and mercy" willeth not the death of poor sinners, but is ready to acquit them on their sincere repentance. Still we must not think, that repentance is the meritorious cause, whereby we may

Ps. xxxvi. 5. his infinite goodness and mercy.
Ps. cxxxvi. 1, &c. And although we ought at all times[h]
Ps. cxi. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 8. humbly to acknowledge our sins
Numb. v. 7.

before God; yet ought we most
chiefly so to do, when we assemble[i] Luke xviii. 10. Psalm
and meet together to render thanks[k] lxxxix. 7.

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claim from God impunity for our sins: for that is vouchsafed to us only by the "infinite mercy and goodness" of God, reached out to us in the mystery of our redemption, and procured for us by the suffering of our blessed Lord. *Dean Comber, Dr. Nicholls.*

[h] *And although we ought at all times*] Or in those more frequent courses of private devotion, (to which we are obliged by our religion, Eph. vi. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 8;) to exercise this duty of confession. *Dr. Nicholls.* Not that we are always to be upon our knees, actually repenting and making confession to him; for that would interfere with other necessary duties: but that we are to be ever willing and readily disposed, on all fit occasions and opportunities, to lay open our offences, without ever thinking or desiring to hide or cloke any thing from the knowledge of God. As our confessing in private will not excuse us from attending upon and joining in the publick confession; so our attending and making a publick confession will not excuse us from the private confession of our sins: the one must not exclude the other, but both are to be observed in their due and proper times; by doing which we may be said, "at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God;" especially if it be daily done and observed by us; for we are said to do always, that which we do every day. And this is no more than what is necessary and fit to be done; for since we daily renew our sins, it is but reason that we should daily renew our confession. And, because we daily commit some particular and secret sins, which enter not the publick confession, and which no eye but God's ever saw, therefore are we daily to make our private confessions, to bewail and repent of them before God; the doing whereof is the performing what is here required, namely, the acknowledging our sins at all times before him. *Dr. Hole.*

The benefits of the frequent practice of private humiliation and confession will be unspeakably great, as it will check all tendency to spiritual pride and presumption, and be the best means of preventing any habit of sin from getting the dominion over us. And there is this peculiar advantage in it, that in our retirements we can look calmly and attentively into our hearts, and examine our dispositions and actions more thoroughly and minutely than we can in publick. *Waldo.*

[i] *—yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble* &c.] Namely, in the solemn assembly of Christians in the church. *Dr. Nicholls.*

As to the institution and use of such publick meetings and church assemblies for the celebration of divine worship, they have been as ancient as religion and christianity itself; which hath ever had, from the beginning, some publick places set apart, by divine authority, for such assemblies. The Jews had the temple and synagogues consecrated for that purpose, where they were commanded to make their confessions and oblations, and other acts of publick worship, which were resorted to and frequented by Christ and his apostles. After which, the Christians had their churches and oratories set apart for divine service, as we read in holy Scripture and ecclesiastical history, and find derived down and continued to us to this day. *Dr. Hole.*

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints," Ps. lxxxix. 7. When Solomon was dedicating the temple of Jerusalem, he intimated in his prayer, not only that it was the properest place for the people to confess their sins in, but also that when they were at a distance from it, so that they were unavoidably deprived of this privilege, they should "confess their sins towards the house of God;" signifying thereby that their hearts should be there, even though their bodies could not. See 1 Kings viii. 29, 30; 38, 39. *Veneer.*

Our Saviour hath laid a peculiar stress on joint prayers; and made more especial promises to those petitions, which his disciples put up in common, Matt. xviii. 20; both to unite them closely in mutual affection by the mutual benefits they receive at each other's request; and to encourage a practice, which he foresaw would prove so powerful a means, both of our own edification, and the conversion of others.

We have reason therefore to entertain a much higher esteem, than we do, of the advantages to be obtained from constancy in publick worship. But then, the more we expect from it, with the more care we must qualify ourselves for what we expect: else we shall certainly be disappointed. And, as penitent confession in the name of Christ is the great qualification for pardon and every mercy; and each one's example, in the church, of that or the contrary, must have a good or bad effect on those around him, we should endeavour, if there be room for any difference, to be more than ordinarily humble and fervent there: yet we are in danger of being least so; unless we look well to our ways, and diligently "keep our foot when we go to the house of God," Eccles. v. 1. *Abp. Secker.*

[k] *—to render thanks* &c.] If we consider for what ends we "assemble and meet together" in those sacred places, dedicated to God's service, we shall soon perceive, that every one of the duties, to be done there, requires, that we be first prepared by repentance; and till we have confessed and bewailed our transgressions, we are not fit nor likely to be accepted in any other parts of the offices. St. Augustine tells us, that the Christians in his time assembled, 'to learn God's law, to declare his wonderful work, to praise him for his gifts, and pray to him for his blessing:' and our Church here shews us, that we have these four things also to do in our assemblies: first, "to render thanks" to God for his benefits, as we do in our Thanksgivings: secondly, "to set forth that praise" of which he is "most worthy," which is done in our Psalms, Hymns, Anthems, and Doxologies: thirdly, "to hear his word," as we do in attending to the reading of the Scriptures, and to the sermons taken from thence: fourthly, "to ask things necessary for our bodies and souls," which we do in our Collects, Supplications, and Intercessions. But, unless true repentance go before, we are unworthy either to give

for the great benefits that we have
Ps. c. 2,3,4. received at his hands, to set forth
his most worthy praise, to hear his
Nehem. viii. 8. Acts xiii. 5. xv. 21. xiii. 44. most holy Word, and to ask those
things which are requisite and neces-
2 Tim. iv. 2. Phil. iv. 6. Acts i. 14. Matt. vii. 11. sary, as well for the body as the
soul. Wherefore I pray and be-
seech you[l], as many as are here 2 Cor. x. 1.
present, to accompany me with a
pure heart, and humble voice, unto 1 Tim. ii. 8. Ps. lxvi. 18.
the throne of the heavenly grace, Heb. xii. 28. Heb. iv. 16.
saying after me[m];

¶ *A general Confession*[n] *to be said of the whole Congregation*[o] *after the Minister*[p], *all kneeling*[q].

thanks, or to sing praise to God, Ps. xxxiii. 1: unfit to hear his most holy word, Matt. vii. 6; or to offer up any prayers to him, John ix. 31. None of these services will be acceptable to God, or can be profitable to us, unless we repent before we go about them. *Dean Comber.*

[l] *Wherefore I pray and beseech you*, &c.] That the people may not come to church in vain, and lose the benefit of so many holy duties, as those just enumerated, the priest "prays" and earnestly "beseeches all that are now present," to join with him in the following Confession: there are none so holy, but they have need to make it; and none so sinful, but they may be profited by it. *Dean Comber.*

The persons, thus addressed and intreated, are all that are present in the congregation: high and low, rich and poor, one with another, young and old, persons of all ages, sexes, states, and conditions; all being sinners, all are here called upon to come and make confession. The thing, to which they are invited, is to "accompany the minister to the throne of the heavenly grace." A great privilege, allowed to the people under the Gospel, which the Jews had not under the Law; for then none entered the temple but the priest only, the people being admitted no farther than the outward court, where they sent and offered up their petitions by the priest. But now they may come more boldly to "the throne of grace," and "accompany" the minister in offering up with him their prayers and confessions, to which he here invites them. *Dr. Hole.*

The conclusion of this Exhortation employs the same pathetick manner of expression that is often to be met with in the New Testament, particularly 2 Cor. x; the first verse of which chapter begins thus: "Now I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ," &c. The substance of it is to teach us to pray "with a pure heart," and in "an humble" manner. Thus the Apostle, 1 Tim. ii. 8, commands men "to lift up holy hands in prayer;" and the Psalmist says, Ps. lxvi. 18, that "if he regarded iniquity in his heart, the Lord would not hear him." And, though the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts us, to go "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need," Heb. iv. 16; yet it appears from chap. xii. 28, that this boldness must be tempered with humility: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." *Veneer.*

It is worthy of observation, how right and judicious this Exhortation is in all its parts, to instruct the ignorant, to admonish the negligent, to support the fearful, to comfort the doubtful, to caution the formal, and to check the presumptuous; seeing all these tempers are found in every mixed congregation, and ought to be prepared for this solemn work. For without preparation, what, alas! would be our approach to the throne of God, but a temptation? For it is a general rule for the temple, as well as for the closet, "before thou prayest, prepare thyself: and be not as one that tempteth the Lord," Ecclus. xviii. 23. Whilst then this Exhortation is reading by the minister, every person ought diligently to listen to its sense; and not ignorantly, as the manner of some is, to repeat the words after him: and in so doing they will be best prepared to accompany him in making the following confession to the throne of grace. *Dr. Bisse.*

[m] —*saying after me;*] It is highly reasonable that the minister should make such a pause between the end of the Exhortation, and the beginning of the Confession, that the whole congregation may have sufficient time, deliberately, and without the least hurry, to put their bodies in a praying posture, and to direct their minds to God, and fix them upon the divine Majesty; so that they may be thoroughly composed for so solemn and heavenly an exercise by the time that the minister begins the Confession. *Dr. Bennet.*

[n] *A general Confession* &c.] It is certain that sin unrepented of hinders the success of our prayers, Is. i. 15; lix. 1, 2; John ix. 31. Such therefore as would pray effectually have always begun with confession; because, when the guilt is removed by penitential acknowledgments, there is no bar to God's grace and mercy. Thus Ezra and Daniel prayed, Ezra ix. 5, 6; Dan. ix. 4, 5. And Christ taught his disciples to ask for pardon, as often as they prayed for their daily bread, Matt. vi. 11, 12. *Dean Comber.* To begin morning prayer with confession of sins may be called the Catholick custom of the primitive church. "Early in the morning," saith St. Basil, "the people rising go straight to the house of prayer, making confession of their sins to God with much sorrow." Which custom was not peculiar to his own church, but consonant, he tells us, to that of all other churches. Confession also was qualified in the same manner as ours, the congregation repeating the words after the minister, "every man," as he says, "pronouncing his own confession with his own mouth." *L'Estrange.* Accordingly, all ancient liturgies have some form for that very purpose: but none more full and proper can be found any where, than this of ours. *Dean Comber.*

There is no one subject in religion, on which the various denominations of Christians are more generally agreed, than the humble confession of our sins to Almighty God. If divine precepts, if the most striking examples and the happy consequences resulting from a right performance of this duty, ought to have any influence on the human heart; not one of us can wilfully

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father[r]; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep[s]. We have followed too much. Psal. cxix. 176. Is. liii. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 25.

neglect the solemn obligation without materially injuring his own soul. *Rogers.*

It is called "a general confession," which it is in a double respect. It is "general" in respect to the persons: for all men are required to make it: "there is no man that liveth and sinneth not," as the Apostle saith; and therefore there is no man living, who is not bound to make confession of his sins. It is also "a general confession" in respect of its contents, which are the general failings and aberrations of human life, which are common to all men, and so may and ought to be confessed by all, without descending to particular sins, of which perhaps some of the congregation may not be guilty. These are to be the subject of men's private confessions, but may not enter into the publick confession of the Church, which ought to be so framed in general terms, that all may truly make and join in it: called for that reason likewise, "a general confession." *Dr. Hole.*

This confession is in its form most solemn, in its extent most comprehensive: for it takes in all kinds of sin, both of omission and of commission: and whilst every single person makes this general confession with his lips, he may make a particular confession with his heart; that is, of his own personal sins, known only to God and to himself: which, if particularly though secretly confessed and repented of, will assuredly be forgiven. This then is the privilege of our confession, that under the general form every man may mentally unfold "the plague of his own heart," his particular sins, whatever they be, as effectually to God, who "alone knoweth the hearts of men," as if he pronounced them in express words. *Dr. Bisse.*

And indeed had this form been more particular or express, it would not so well have answered the purpose, for which it was designed: for a common confession ought to be so contrived, that every person present may truly speak his own case; whereas a particular confession would be little less than an inquisition, forcing those that join in it to accuse and condemn themselves of those sins daily, which perhaps they never committed in their lives. *Wheatly.*

The Confession may be considered as consisting of two parts, besides the introduction or address to God: first, the confession properly so called, wherein we acknowledge our errings and strayings from God's ways by our original and actual transgressions, by our general and particular vices, and by our sins both of omission and commission; together with the forlorn and helpless condition to which they have all reduced us. The second part of it contains petitions for mercy and pardon for past offences, and likewise for grace to prevent them for the future. *Dr. Hole.*

[o] —*to be said of the whole Congregation*] This provision of the Church is made with good reason. For could there be any thing devised better, than that we all, at our first access unto God by prayer, should acknowledge meekly our sins, and that not only in heart but with tongue; all that are present being made earnest witnesses, even of every man's distinct and deliberate assent to each particular branch of a common indictment drawn against ourselves? how were it possible that the Church should any way else, with such ease and certainty, provide, that none of her children may dissemble that wretchedness, the penitent confession whereof is so necessary a preamble especially to common prayer? *Bp. Sparrow.*

The Confession is directed "to be said of the whole congregation after the minister." If this be done by each person, as is also directed, "with an humble voice," he will give no disturbance to others, and every one must experience, that what he saith, on this occasion, with his own mouth, is brought more home to his soul, becomes more personal and affecting, than if he had silently assented to it, when said for him. And as it is a very useful, so it is a very old custom; revived in our Church, after being laid aside by the Church of Rome; who begin their service with an act of humiliation by the priest alone, in which the people have no share. *Abp. Secker.*

[p] —*after the Minister,*] Because the Church has injoined, that the general Confession shall be said by the whole of the congregation after the minister; therefore all ministers would do well to take care, that they do not begin a new portion thereof, before the people have had time enough to repeat the former with due deliberation. For nothing certainly can be more indecent, than the hurrying over of such an excellent form as this is; which ought to be so uttered, as that the souls of the people may go along with their words, that they may pass on leisurely from one thing to another, and the whole may be offered to God as a rational service.

The people also should remember, that when they are repeating the several portions of the Confession after the minister, they are speaking to God, and transacting with him the grand affair of repentance, and reconciliation to his favour, upon which their everlasting happiness depends. Let them therefore not behave themselves after a careless and slovenly manner; let them not utter the words in such a tone as betokens irreverence, and proves that they do not mind what they say, or to whom they speak: but consider the vast importance of the duty of prayer, and the indispensable necessity of a due performance of it; and that confession of sins is the most solemn part of prayer. Let these considerations sink deep into them, and prevail upon them so to perform this duty, that it may obtain a remission, and not add to the number of their sins. *Dr. Bennet.*

And especially they should remember, that, since none are fit to pray till they have confessed their sins, it is necessary for every one to come early to prayers, and always to be there so soon as to join in this Confession, which, if duly considered, will greatly assist and direct us in the exercise of our repentance. *Dean Comber.*

It is painful to see what numbers are habitually late in coming to church. The practice carries with it such an air of irreverence, as must be sufficient to convince every sober and thinking person of its extreme impropriety. *Rogers.*

Gen. vi. 5. Jer. xxiii. 17, 19. Jam. i. 14, 15. the devices and desires of our own hearts[t]. We have offended against thy holy laws[u]. We have left undone those things which we ought Dan. ix. 9, 10. Ps. xix. 7, 8. 1 John iii. 4. Rom. vii. 12.

[q]—*all kneeling.*] There is nothing that we do in this world comparable to the publick acts and exercises of religion; and therefore nothing deserves or requires a greater solemnity. For which reason the Church requires us, in all our prayers and confessions, to be on our knees: for which we have the example of our Saviour, and of all good men in all ages, who have always performed their publick devotions with humble and lowly gestures, and most commonly in this particular posture of kneeling. *Dr. Hole.*

And that posture in prayer, especially in this part, hath not only ancient authority but nature itself, on its side: and doth so strongly both express and excite inward humility, that it should never be omitted wilfully, or negligently, in favour of ease and indolence: considerations, very unworthy of notice at such a time. Still they, whose infirmities will not permit them to be on their knees without pain or hurt, may doubtless allowably stand, or even sit: for God "will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7. And farther; as in many full congregations this rule cannot be observed by every one without taking up more room than can with convenience be spared; certainly the superior rule, of doing "the things wherewith one may edify another," Rom. xiv. 19, binds us rather to be content with standing, though a less eligible posture, than exclude numbers of our fellow Christians from being tolerably accommodated for joining in worship with us. For kneeling, though greatly preferable, is not prescribed as indispensably necessary. "The children of Israel," we read in the book of Nehemiah, "were assembled fasting," and, probably for the reason just mentioned, "stood and confessed their sins," Nehem. ix. 2. The penitent publican did not fail of being accepted, though he stood, when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner," Luke xviii. 13. And on some days the early Christians did not kneel at all. *Abp. Secker.*

Kneeling is the attitude prescribed to us in this solemn act of confession. This visible expression of humility will be adopted, so far as circumstances will permit, by every faithful worshipper. Undoubtedly every reasonable allowance will be made for age and bodily infirmity: but a wilful negligence, or a fashionable carelessness, in this part of our devotions must be unjustifiable, and therefore inexcusable. *Rogers.*

[r] *Almighty and most merciful Father;*] This introduction sets before us Him, whom we have offended, under the two proper titles of "Almighty and most merciful Father:" the first to shew us his power, and strike us with a holy fear of his anger; the second to manifest his love, and melt us with the sense of his mercy: the former reminds us of the danger of standing out in our disobedience; the latter declares the hopes of being received into his favour again upon our repentance: and though his omnipotence might terrify us, yet his mercy invites us to return and confess our sins both small and great. *Dean Comber.*

We also invoke Him by the endearing appellation of "Father," according to the direction given us by our Lord in his prayer; thereby considering him as the Author and Preserver of our being, and above all, as our "Father" by redemption, having "begotten us again unto a lively hope in Christ Jesus, and made us accepted in the Beloved." *Waldo.*

And here we may observe once for all the wisdom and piety of the Church in selecting such titles and attributes of God in the beginning of all her prayers, as are most proper for the petitions that follow them, and most likely to produce suitable affections. Such are the titles of "Almighty and most merciful Father" here prefixed to the Confession. *Dr. Hole.*

[s] *We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.*] It is well known that God's servants are called his sheep. Thus David says, "We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture," Ps. c. 2. and God is accordingly called a Shepherd; for instance, David says, "The Lord is my Shepherd," Ps. xxiii. 1: and our Saviour speaks of his disciples as his sheep, particularly John x. 1—5: and therefore when God's servants break his laws, and forsake the paths of his commandments, they are said to wander like sheep. Thus the Psalmist says, "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost," Ps. cxix. 176. And the prophet says, "All we like sheep have gone astray," Is. liii. 6: and our Saviour compares sinners to lost sheep, Matth. xv. 24: so that this expression is exactly scriptural, as well as very significant and proper. *Dr. Bennet.*

But to understand the full propriety of the phrase, it must be observed, that both the likelihood of straying was much greater, and the consequences of it much more fatal, in open countries, full of wild beasts, as those of the east were, than in ours. And such "a great and terrible wilderness" in this sense is the world. Deut. i. 19. *Abp. Secker.* Alas! how frequently do we forsake the safe fold, the pure streams, and the green pasture, which God hath provided for us, and wander into a dry and barren wilderness, where we want all true comforts, and are exposed to a thousand evils! And then how fitly are these errings and strayings of ours represented by a lost sheep! *Dean Comber.*

Some persons here distinguish between the words "erred" and "strayed;" supposing the former to relate to sins of ignorance, infirmity, and daily occurrence; the other, to more gross violations of God's laws, more wilful forsaking of his ways, and straying in the destructive paths of sin and wickedness. *Dr. Hole.*

[t] *We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.*] By this we understand the original corruption and depravation of our nature, which renders us too prone to evil, and averse from that which is good. Since the fall, our understanding is apt to imagine and devise evil, and our affections to lust after it. We devise false notions of evil things, and call them good, and under that false disguise we naturally desire them: but we do not charge God as the author of this corruption, but confess it springs from "our own hearts," James i. 13, 14, 15. Nor do we accuse ourselves for having, but for "following" those evil devices and desires: it is our unhappiness to have them, but that which we confess as our sin is our aptness to "follow them too much," our

to have done[x]; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us[y]. But thou, O Lord, have mercy[z] upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults[a]. Restore thou them that are penitent[b];

Psal. cxix. 155. Is. i. 5, 6. Hos. xiii. 9.

Dan. ix. 18, 19. Ps. li. 1. Rev. iii. 17. Luke xviii. 13. Prov. xxviii. 13. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Ps. li. 12.

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not checking these desires as we ought, but too often fulfilling them; and then they produce actual sins, which St. John defines to be "the transgression of God's law," 1 John iii. 4; and which we confess in the following article, "we have offended against thy holy laws." *Dean Comber.*

In the two first sentences of the Confession a very just and striking contrast seems to be intended: as if it were said, "We have erred and strayed from thy way," O Lord, from that way which leadeth to life eternal; and have wandered in "our own" ways, in that broad path, which leadeth to destruction. *Waldo.*

[u] *We have offended against thy holy laws.*] We cannot say but that we knew God's commands: and, although we have been so wicked as to break them, yet we must confess they are "holy, and just, and good," Rom. vii. 12; and therefore we have great reason to acknowledge with shame and sorrow our manifold breaches and violations of them. *Dean Comber, Dr. Hole.*

[x] *We have left undone* &c.] Our breaches of God's laws consist in sins of omission and of commission: both of which are here confessed and bewailed. When we "leave undone those things which we ought to do," we offend against God's laws by sins of omission. The divine laws lay many things as duties upon us, which we are obliged to observe and do; and that with relation to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. As to God, we are commanded to worship him, by praying to him, by hearing his word, and receiving the holy Sacrament, and the like. To men we owe the good offices of justice and charity: to ourselves, the duties of temperance, sobriety, contentedness, and the like. Now when we cast off the practice of all or any of these things, as when we neglect the worship of God, or turn our back on his word, and sacraments; when we omit the duties we are to pay our neighbour or ourselves; then do we "leave undone those things which we ought to have done," and so offend against God's holy laws by sins of omission. Again, when we "do what we ought not to do," then do we offend by sins of commission. The laws of God forbid some things, as well as command others; yea, the same law, that doth command one thing, doth always forbid the contrary to it. As the law, that requires us to worship God, forbids atheism, apostasy, blasphemy, with all other acts of irreligion and profaneness: the laws, that require honesty, truth, and fidelity in all our dealings, forbid dishonesty, lying, cheating, with all manner of falsehood and oppression: the law, that commands us to be sober and temperate in all things, condemns drunkenness, luxury, and all kinds of excess. Now the not doing our duty is a sin of omission; and doing a thing forbidden, is a sin of commission; and by both we "offend against God's holy laws." *Dr. Hole.*

[y] *And there is no health in us.*] It is frequent in Scripture both to set forth the corruption and unsoundness of the mind by the maladies and distempers of the body; and to express the weakness and want of spiritual strength in the one by the natural defects and decays of the other. So that by this part of the Confession we may very well understand, first, that we are not in a state of spiritual health, but are infected by sin; and, secondly, that we cannot help, preserve, or deliver ourselves from it, and from the consequences of it; but must look somewhere else: and where that is, God himself hath told us, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help," Hos. xiii. 9. Thither then we must have recourse; and thither the Church directs us. *Dr. Hole, Dr. Bennet.*

The words, "and there is no health in us," besides that they profess our inward frame throughout to be more or less disordered, signify too, that we have no power of our own, either to cure the spiritual diseases, of which we are already sick, or to prevent the attacks of future ones. And therefore we apply to God, that he should "heal our souls," Ps. xli. 4; whom also, in the conclusion, we implicitly promise, that, whatever amendment shall be produced in us by the means which he prescribes, we will give the glory of it, not to ourselves, but to his holy name; "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace," Eph. i. 3, 6. *Abp. Secker.*

[z] *But thou, O Lord, have mercy* &c.] This is the commencement of the second part of the Confession, consisting of petitions, for pardon of what is past, and for grace to be preserved from sin in future. *Dr. Hole.* Having described the sad estate, into which we have brought ourselves by our iniquities, we are taught to look up to him, who is able to deliver us from the guilt, as also from the punishment and the power of them. And, first, since we are "miserable sinners" by the guilt of these offences, we cry unto the Lord to "have mercy upon us," that is, to pity and pardon us, as the phrase implies, Ps. li. 1; Luke xviii. 13: for misery is the proper object of mercy, and forgivenesses peculiarly belong to God. *Dean Comber.*

[a] *Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.*] This relates to the removal of the punishment due to our offences. We beseech God not to inflict the penalty they deserve, but to exercise his mercy and pity in sparing us from condign punishment. And the condition, upon which we ask it, is the confession of sin: for we do not say, Spare all men indefinitely as miserable offenders, but "Spare thou them, O God, that confess their faults:" intimating our persuasion, that without confession to God we have no hopes of being spared. *Dr. Hole.* Not indeed that we presume to have any meritorious claim or title to his forgiveness on account of any thing we can do, much less on account of a bare confession of our sins, be it ever so sincere: we only mention this as the first step towards that thorough repentance, which is the condition absolutely required of us in order that we may obtain mercy. *Waldo.*

[b] *Restore thou them that are penitent;*] As in the former petition we prayed to be delivered from the pu-

Luke xxiv. 47. Heb. viii. 12. 1 John i. 9. Matth. xi. 28, 29. Joh. xvi. 23.

According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord[c]. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake[d]; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

Acts xi. 18. Tit. ii. 12. Phil. i. 9, 10, 11. Matt. vi. 9. Luke i. 49. 1 Cor. x. 31.

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nishment, so here we pray to be delivered from the power and dominion of sin. As if it were said, "Restore us, gracious Lord, to the light that sin has deprived us of, and to thy favour which we have justly forfeited by our numberless transgressions: restore the faculties of our minds, our reason, our understandings, our wills, from their present depraved state, to some degree of that perfection, for which they were originally designed: restore both our souls and bodies from being instruments of sin to be instruments of holiness, and of promoting thy glory:" not that we are to expect an entire renovation of our nature to its primitive purity in this life; but we may expect, and humbly pray for, such a change in it, as may make us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:" in which blessed state alone we shall be perfectly free from sin, and perfectly happy. *Waldo.*

[c] *According to thy promises—in Christ Jesu our Lord.*] For through Him alone we can have access to the Father; and all our petitions must be offered in his name, if we hope to be heard. *Waldo.* The favours, which the Church hath here instructed us to ask, are very great; but they are no more than God hath engaged to give to repenting sinners in the Gospel of his dear Son; there he hath assured us, we shall be forgiven, Heb. viii. 11; spared, 1 John i. 9; and restored, Matt. xi. 28, 29. *Dean Comber.*

[d] *And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,* &c.] This is the concluding part of the Confession, added by the Church in order to render the Confession successful; for though we acknowledge and bewail our sins, yet, without amendment, it will avail nothing to a pardon: and, because we are unable of ourselves to reform our evil ways, we are to beg grace and spiritual strength, that we may be enabled to do so. *Dr. Hole.*

The petition is, that we may "live a godly, righteous, and sober life." For St. Paul teaches us, Tit. ii. 12, that this was the very end, why God shewed mercy to us through Christ Jesus; and it must be our endeavour, as well as our prayer, to live, first, godly, that is, exercising all piety and devotion in our services towards God: secondly, righteously, that is, in all honesty and equity, fidelity and charity, towards our neighbours: thirdly, soberly, that is, governing ourselves, and our own bodies and souls, with all temperance and moderation, humility, modesty, and charity, which is the sum of our whole duty to God and man. *Dean Comber.*

And the apostle having thus summed up all practical Christianity, the Church has with great reason taken this comprehensive expression into her Liturgy: for it is impossible to comprise more sense in fewer, or better, or plainer words. *Dr. Bennet.*

It should be added, that this petition we desire "our most merciful Father to grant for his Son's sake," who hath purchased a pardon for us, and promised it upon the terms of confession and amendment, which we therefore ask in his name; having told us, that he will do it for us, that his Father may be glorified, John xiv. 13: and therefore it is added in the close "to the glory of his holy name." For as by a bad life we dishonour our profession, and "blaspheme his holy name," so "by good works" we are said to "glorify our Father which is in heaven:" "For herein is my Father glorified," saith Christ, "that ye bring forth much fruit:" which fruit will redound, not only to our own good, but "to the praise and glory of God." All which we shut up and seal with "Amen" to signify our full assent and consent to it. So that we shall be condemned out of our own mouth, if we live and act contrary thereunto. *Dean Comber.*

Since confession of sin is a duty appointed by the Almighty, we cannot wilfully neglect it without openly violating his express command. Nor can we perform it in a careless and trifling manner, without justly incurring the charge of great inconsistency or base hypocrisy. The only way, whereby we are to judge of our conduct in this respect, so as to determine with any tolerable degree of satisfaction, whether our confession be real or only feigned, is by our present feelings and subsequent deportment. If we are anxious to be delivered both from the dominion and from the guilt of sin; and are desirous of experiencing that repentance which is unto salvation; such a frame of mind may be fairly considered as a testimony, that, when we acknowledge our sinfulness, we speak forth the words of truth and soberness. And if our future conduct be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ, there cannot remain a doubt, but that the same divine Power, the same grace that hath wrought all our works in us, hath graciously accepted our confession, and mercifully pardoned our iniquity. But if we confess our sins from mere custom or formality; or arrogantly suppose, that, when we have acknowledged and professed to lament them, we may safely set out again in the career of vice; we are most awfully deceiving ourselves. It is he only that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, that shall find mercy. *Rogers.*

In the Confession we acknowledge our daily offences in general; and there is no means so powerful to obtain pardon for them as the daily prayers of the Church to that purpose. So that the course, which our Church here prescribeth, for the pardon of our daily offences, being put in practice, what can be more just, more due, than to declare that forgiveness and absolution, which those that are, as these profess to be, penitent for those sins, do obtain? What more comfortable than to hear the news of it from the mouth of him, by whom the Church ministereth these offices? What more seasonable than to do this before we come to give God his solemn praise and honour in our publick services, that we may be assured he accepts of the same at our hands? This solemn beginning of our Service with confession and absolution serves to put the people in mind, that all which follows is the solemn service of Almighty God, preparing them to that attention of mind, and devotion of spirit, which they owe to it, and which are requisite to make it acceptable. *Bp. Cosins.*

¶ *The Absolution*[e], *or Remission of sins*[f], *to be pronounced by the Priest alone*[g], *standing; the people still kneeling.*

ALMIGHTY God[h], the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ[i], who Rom. xv. 6.

[e] *The Absolution,*] The penitent, having been thus humbled for his sins, doth now deserve and need some comfort. And since our Lord hath endued his ambassadors with the ministry of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 18, they can never have a more proper occasion to exercise it than now. Sin is compared to a bond, Acts viii. 23, Prov. v. 22, because it binds down the soul by its guilt and power, and hinders it from free converse with God, yea, makes it liable to eternal condemnation; but Jesus came to unloose these bonds, Isa. lxi. 1; and actually did so to divers, when he was upon earth, and left this power to his apostles and their successors, when he went to heaven; and this unloosing men from the bond of their sin is that, which we properly call "absolution," and it is a necessary and most comfortable part of the priest's office. *Dean Comber.*

The absolution is an act of authority, by virtue of a "power and commandment" of God "to his ministers," as it is in the preface of this Absolution: and as we read in St. John's Gospel, chap. xx. 22, 23, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted." And if our confession be serious and hearty, this absolution is as effectual, as if God did pronounce it from heaven. So says the Confession of Saxony and Bohemia, and so says the Augustan Confession. St. Chrysostom, St. Augustin, and St. Cyprian, and generally all antiquity, say the same. So does our Church in many places, particularly in the form of absolution for the sick. But above all, holy Scripture is clear, as in the passage just cited from St. John. For the power of "remitting sins" was not to end with the apostles; but is a part of the ministry of reconciliation, as necessary now as it was then, and therefore to continue as long as the ministry of reconciliation, that is, to the end of the world, Eph. iv. 12, 13. When therefore the priest absolves, God absolves, if we be truly penitent. *Bp. Sparrow.* Our blessed Lord, in his last instructions to his apostles, as recorded by St. Matthew, bids them "go, teach all nations, &c;" and concludes with these encouraging words, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here, as well as in St. John, we see a commission granted, and a promise annexed to it. The promise is that which is somewhat differently expressed in St. John's Gospel, namely, of the presence and protection of Christ by the Holy Spirit; which, he assures them in the plainest words possible, was to be perpetual: "I am with you *alway*, even *unto the end of the world:*" not unto the end of their lives, but unto the end of the world. Now if the promise of divine assistance and protection made to the apostles was to extend in some degree to their successors in all after-ages, so certainly was the commission likewise, to which that promise was annexed. A very material part of which commission is the power of remitting sins, or absolving, mentioned by St. John. Upon the whole, the Church of England, wisely guarding against the errors of the Church of Rome on the one hand, and against those of such as have hastily gone into the contrary extreme on the other; and appealing to Scripture for the truth of her doctrine; maintains, that some power of absolving or remitting sins, derived from the apostles, remains with their successors in the ministry; and accordingly, at the ordination of priests, the words of our Saviour, on which the power is founded, are solemnly repeated to them by the bishop, and the power at the same time conferred. We do not pretend it is in any sort a discretionary power of forgiving sins; for the priest has no discernment of the spirits and hearts of men, as the apostles had; but a power of pronouncing authoritatively, in the name of God, who has committed to the priests the "ministry of reconciliation," his pardon and forgiveness to all true penitents and sincere believers. That God alone can forgive sins, that he is the sole author of all blessings, spiritual as well as temporal, is undeniable: but that he can declare his gracious assurance of pardon and convey his blessings to us, by what means and instruments he thinks fit, is no less certain. In whatever way he vouchsafes to do it, it is our duty humbly and thankfully to receive them; not to dispute his wisdom in the choice of those means and instruments; for in that case, "he, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God." *Waldo.*

As to the words of the Absolution, some persons have apprehended it to be a very popish form. But neither it, nor the Confession which precedes, is taken out of any popish service. On the contrary, both of them appeared for the first time in the second edition of King Edward the Sixth's Common Prayer Book; which was made with the advice of foreign, and even Presbyterian Protestants. Nay, this Absolution was directly levelled against Popery. For the popish absolutions were given in private, separately to each particular person, positively and without reversion, in the name of the priest; and this is given in public, to all persons at once, conditionally, if they are truly penitent, in the name of God. The people were misled by the former absolutions to a groundless trust in sacerdotal power; and would have taken offence, if, after their confession, none had been subjoined. This therefore was drawn up to be used over them; which tends very powerfully to comfort men, but can never mislead them; because it leads them to trust only in God's mercy; and that, no otherwise, than if they "truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel," proving their sincerity by their reformation: on which terms alone he hath "given to his ministers power and commandment to pronounce to his people the absolution and remission of their sins." *Abp. Secker.*

[f] *—or Remission of sins,*] These words were added to this rubrick by order from the Conference at Hampton Court in King James the First's time, for the satisfaction of those who took exception against the word "Absolution," as being of too popish a sound. *Dr. Bisse.*

[g] *—to be pronounced by the Priest alone,*] The term used to express the priest's delivery of the Absolution is a very solemn one: for the Latin "pronuncio," whence it is taken, signifies properly to pronounce or give sentence: and therefore the word "pronounced," here used, must signify that this is a sentence of absolution or remission of sins, to be authoritatively uttered by one who has received commission from God. *Wheatly.*

Also, it is to be pronounced "by the priest alone:" because none has received that power but a priest. *Bp. Andrewes.* That is, by the priest, not only in contradistinction to the people, but likewise to the inferior order

Ezek. xxxiii. 11. desireth not the death of a sinner[k], but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live[l]; and hath John xx. 23. given power, and commandment, to Ezekiel xxxiv. 4.

of deacons, who have no right to this power, which is annexed only to the priesthood. *Dr. Hole.* The Absolution is to be pronounced by virtue of the commission mentioned John xx. 23. Upon which account the Church hath not allowed this form to be pronounced by a deacon, to whom that commission is not given; but hath reserved it to the priests, who at their ordination are vested with that authority. Though therefore the word "minister" be put, both in the foregoing rubrick, before the Confession, and in that following, before the Lord's Prayer, yet in this before the Absolution, though coming just between them, the word "priest" is inserted: which was done at the last review of our Liturgy, in 1661, to distinguish and limit this power to the priest's office. *Dr. Bisse.* For at the Savoy conference, the Presbyterian divines, who were appointed by the king to treat with the Bishops about the alterations that were to be made in the Common Prayer, had desired, that, as the word "minister" was used in the Absolution, and in divers other places; it might also be used throughout the whole book, instead of the word "priest;" but to this the Bishops' answer was very peremptory and full; namely, "It is not reasonable the word minister should be only used in the Liturgy: for since some parts of the Liturgy may be performed by a deacon, others by none under the order of priest, namely, absolution, consecration; it is fit that some such word as priest should be used for those offices, and not minister, which signifies at large every one that ministers in the holy offices, of what order soever he be." And agreeably to this answer, when they came to make the necessary alterations in the Liturgy, they not only refused to change "priest" for "minister," but also threw out the word "minister," and put "priest" in the room of it even in this rubrick before the Absolution. So that it is undeniably plain, that by this rubrick deacons are expressly forbid to pronounce this form: since the word "priest" in this place, if interpreted according to the intent of those that inserted it, is expressly limited to one in priest's orders, and does not comprehend any minister that officiates, whether priest or deacon. *Wheatly.*

If farther proof were wanting, that, according to the existing regulations of the Church of England, a deacon may not read the Absolution, the ecclesiastical commissioners, appointed in 1691 to revise the Liturgy, have furnished us with one full to the purpose. They knew, that, as matters then stood, none but a priest could lawfully read the Absolution, and therefore, among other alterations, they proposed, that a rubrick should be made authorizing a deacon to read it. Their proposed alterations, it is well known, were never carried into effect, and the whole of the project was entirely abandoned. Of course the law empowering a "priest alone" to pronounce the Absolution, remains unaltered, and in full force. *Shepherd.*

If it be asked, what course an officiating deacon should pursue, when he comes to the Absolution? The answer appears plain. After the Confession he is to remain kneeling, and to proceed to the Lord's Prayer. If, instead of the Absolution, any prayer be admissible, the preference ought evidently to be given to the "prayer which may be said after any of the former," which stands before the prayer for the parliament. This may with propriety be called a precatory absolution. *Shepherd.*

It should be also observed from this rubrick, that it is an improper usurpation of the priest's office for the people to repeat this form after him, more particularly since not even a deacon is permitted to use it. The rubrick itself enjoins the contrary, directing it to be said "by the priest alone." The words of the preamble also expressly say, that "God hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce absolution and remission of sins," which the people, being penitent, are to receive, not to give. Farther: the difference of their posture declares the difference of their duty: the priest being appointed to pronounce it "standing," as performing an act of authority, in the capacity of God's ambassador; whilst the people are injoined to continue "still kneeling," in token of penitence, and of that humility and reverence, with which they ought to receive the joyful news of a pardon from God. Besides; whereas the Absolution ends at the words, "unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel," and the words following "wherefore let us beseech him &c," quite to the end, are likewise not a prayer but an exhortation, teaching the people what to pray for; these latter words, as well as the former, do both belong to the office of "the priest alone:" so that the people ought to receive the one and to listen to the other, and by no means to repeat either after him. *Dr. Bisse, Dr. Bennet.*

And they should observe, that wherever in the service the congregation are not directed to speak, but the minister only, their speaking the same words low, as many persons inconsiderately do, removes only part of the impropriety, and leaves the rest. On this therefore and the like occasions let them remember, that their business is only to hearken and assent with silent reverence: of which reverence, in the present case, continuing on their knees, in token of their humble thankfulness to God, is undoubtedly a suitable expression. *Abp. Secker.*

The word "alone" has still a farther use: for, as it relates to the publick use of the service in the church, where it implies that the people must not in this, as in their antecedent confession, say after the minister, but leave it to be pronounced by him alone; so does it relate to the private use. For morning and evening prayer were not in their original designation intended by our Reformers, as only peculiar to church assemblies, but as well appointed for the service of God in private families. Now lest in the private exercises of piety the people or laity should ignorantly rush into the priest's office, this caution is entered by the Church, declaring that the minister alone, and no layman, ought then to officiate. *L'Estrange.*

[h] *Almighty God,* &c.] The Absolution consists of two distinct parts: first, a general declaration of the mercy of God to returning sinners, and an assurance of his pardon to us, on condition of our true faith and hearty repentance; and, secondly, an admonition to us, to implore the assistance of his holy Spirit, in order to enable us to perform those conditions, and thereby to render this pardon effectual to our eternal salvation. *Waldo.*

[i] —*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*] Who hath

his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them[m] that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him[n] to grant us true repentance,

Mark i. 15. Luke xiii. 3. Ezek. xviii. 27. 2 Cor. vii. 10. Acts xiii. 39. xx. 21. 2Tim.ii.25. Acts v. 31. James i. 17.

made a full satisfaction to divine justice for all our sins. The Son hath merited our pardon; and the Father hath promised it thereupon: as his mercy therefore inclines him, so his justice now engages him to forgive, 1 John i. 9. Nothing now lies in our way: as he is "almighty," he is able to pardon: as he is "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," he is ever willing and ready to bestow it. *Dr. Hole.* The Church begins this Absolution, as the apostles do some of their epistles, by representing to us Almighty God under the character of "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and in him, "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," 2 Cor. i. 3. And nothing surely can be more proper for humble penitents, after having confessed their sins to God, than to consider him as the fountain of all goodness, derived to them through the merits of his blessed Son; "knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance." Rom. ii. 4. *Waldo.*

[k] —*who desireth not the death of a sinner,*] These are the words of God himself, Ezek. xviii. 23; and for better confirmation are again repeated, chap. xxxiii. 11, and are strengthened by an oath, which he is pleased to take by his life, that is, himself, Heb. vi. 13. Not that he needs such bonds to keep him to his promise; but for the confirmation of our faith, and as a condescension to our infirmity. Indeed all God's words are most true, but not many have an oath annexed, as this hath; which he would not have added, but because the belief of this is the foundation of all religion, since no man can begin to seek God till he believes that God delights in mercy, Heb. xi. 6, and is willing to receive those that turn to him. *Dean Comber.*

[l] —*but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live;*] Whilst we endeavour to prevent despair, we must be cautious not to encourage presumption. Lest therefore any should think, when they hear of God's kindness to sinners, that he will allow them their sins, Rom. vi. 1; this is added to shew that he so desires our happiness as the end, that he desires our holiness as the way thither. He would have us live, namely, in eternal glory; but his desires cannot be accomplished, if we continue in our wickedness. *Dean Comber.*

[m] *He pardoneth and absolveth all them* &c.] It is here to be noticed, that the minister does not presume to pardon or absolve in his own right, nor to publish absolution in his own name, but only in the power or name of God, saying, "He pardoneth and absolveth:" where the word "He" refers to Almighty God at the commencement of the Absolution. It is also to be noticed, that this declaration is not absolute and without limitation: it is confined to such only as "truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel." But then, as the minister pronounces pardon only to the penitent, so does he declare it to all that are so. It is not withheld from any that are qualified to receive it: but it is pronounced by authority of Almighty God "to all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel." *Dr. Hole.*

And here let us silently pray to God, that he will confirm, and make this declaration of his pardon effectual; which we may be assured he will do, provided we are not wanting in the conditions required on our parts, namely, faith and repentance. *Waldo.* These are by Christ and by his apostles made the conditions of the Gospel promises, Mark i. 15; Acts xx. 21: and without them no absolution can be had. Those, that have these, no man can condemn: but without these no man can acquit. *Dean Comber.*

Is it true that the Lord hath no delight in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live? Then what excuse can we frame, or how shall we be able to justify ourselves, for living another day, or another hour, in the wilful commission of sin? Again. Does the Lord pardon and absolve all them, that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel? With what earnestness and devotion ought we to beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit? Without the forgiveness of sins, our own conscience tells us we cannot be saved: and without true repentance, there is no forgiveness: nor is there any true repentance without the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit. These truths ought to be deeply impressed on our minds. They are brought fully into our view, whenever we assemble in the house of prayer. They speak to our conscience every time we look into our Bible. And they often force themselves upon us in private. Let us beware of closing our eyes against them, and of excluding them from our hearts. *Rogers.*

[n] *Wherefore let us beseech him* &c.] After the priest has pronounced the Absolution, the Church reasonably exhorts us, to "beseech Almighty God to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit:" which may perhaps require explanation, considering, that we have just been professing to exercise repentance, and have been assured of God's forgiveness upon it, of which the gift of his Spirit is a consequence. But, as repentance is a necessary disposition to pardon, so that neither God will, nor man can, absolve the impenitent; so is it in some of its parts a necessary consequent of pardon. The remembrance of sin must always, though we have been pardoned, be grievous to us; which is one part of repentance. And amendment of life, and the bringing forth of fruits worthy of repentance, which is another part, is not only necessary after pardon, but is the more necessary because of pardon, by reason of the mercy and love thereby shown to us, and the new obligation thus laid upon us to live well. The pardoned therefore had need to pray for repentance and the grace of God's Holy Spirit, the continuance of which with us depends on the continuance of our supplications for his presence, which supplications will also procure us greater degrees of it, that so both our present service and our future life may be "pleasing" to God. *Bp. Sparrow, Abp. Secker.*

For our encouragement the Church instructs us in conclusion, that, if we thus apply to God, and to our prayers join our own best endeavours, the result will be,

Luke xi. 13. 1 Cor. xii. 3. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. and his holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which we do at this present; and that the rest of our 1 John iii. 3. 2 Cor. vii. 1. life hereafter may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jude 21.

¶ *The people shall answer here, and at the end of all other prayers,* Amen[o].

¶ *Then the Minister shall kneel, and say the Lord's Prayer*[p] *with an audible voice*[q], *the people also* Luke xi. 2.

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first, present acceptance, secondly, future assistance, and thirdly, everlasting happiness. First, "Those things which we do at this present," our confession, absolution, prayers, praises, thanksgivings, and all the services we perform in the house of God, will be well pleasing in his sight. Secondly, Our lives hereafter, directed by the guidance of his holy Spirit, will be pure from their former sins, and virtuous and holy. And thirdly, At the last we shall receive the reward of our faith and obedience, "his eternal joy" through the merits of our blessed Redeemer; who by his precious death has purchased for us pardon and absolution from all our sins; is now a prevailing Intercessor with the Father for the blessings we implore; and will, at his return to judge the world, receive us into those heavenly mansions, which he is gone before to prepare for every true penitent and sincere believer. *Shepherd.*

[o] *The people shall answer here, and at the end of all other prayers, Amen.*] The word here injoined to be used is originally Hebrew, and signifies the same in English as "So be it." But the word itself has been retained in all languages, to express the assent of the person, that pronounces it, to that to which he returns it as an answer. As it is used in the Common Prayer, it bears different significations according to the different forms, to which it is annexed. At the end of prayers and collects, it is addressed to God, and signifies, "So be it, O Lord, as in our prayers we have expressed:" but at the end of exhortations, absolutions, and creeds, it is addressed to the priest; and then the meaning of it is, either, "So be it, this is our sense and meaning;" or "So be it, we entirely assent to and approve of what has been said." *Wheatly.*

This was the practice of the Jewish church: it was also that of the Christian in the apostles' days. "How shall he, that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" 1 Cor. xiv. 16: and the subsequent ecclesiastical writers shew, that it used to be pronounced audibly and fervently; each expressing his own faith or desire, and animating that of his fellow-worshippers. We should therefore by no means neglect to give this proof, amongst others, that we, not only hear the service with attention, but join in it with earnestness. *Abp. Secker.*

Still it is not barely putting "Amen" to the Confession and Absolution, that can prove us either true penitents, or truly pardoned. Our hearts and lives must be in a growing state of conformity to the will of God, before we can draw any just and favourable conclusions respecting our own safety. For the Lord hath clearly revealed it, and our Church invariably speaks the same language, that none will be admitted at the last to his eternal joy, but such as have confessed and forsaken their sins, and fled for refuge and pardon to the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord. And the more lively sense we have of the riches of his grace, the more holy shall we be in all manner of conversation. *Rogers.*

In our present Common Prayer Book it is observable, that the Amen is sometimes printed in one character, and sometimes in another. The reason of which I take to be this; at the end of all the collects and prayers, which the priest is to repeat or say alone, it is printed in Italick, a different character from the prayers themselves, to denote, I suppose, that the minister is to stop at the end of the prayer, and to leave the Amen for the people to respond: but at the Lord's prayer, confessions, creeds, &c, and wheresoever the people are to join aloud with the minister, as if taught and instructed by him what to say, there it is printed in the same character with the confessions and creeds themselves, as a hint to the minister that he is still to go on, and by pronouncing the Amen himself, to direct the people to do the same, and so to set their seal at last to what they had been before pronouncing.

By the people's being directed by this rubrick "to answer Amen at the end of the prayers," they might easily perceive, that they are expected to be silent in the prayers themselves, and to go along with the minister in their minds. For the minister is the appointed intercessor for the people, and consequently it is his office to offer up their prayers and praises in their behalf: insomuch that the people have nothing more to do, than to attend to what he says, and to declare their assent by an Amen at last, without disturbing those that are near them by muttering over the collects in a confused manner, as is practised by too many in most congregations, contrary to common sense as well as decency and good manners. *Wheatly.*

[p] *Then the minister shall kneel, and say the Lord's Prayer.*] Hitherto we have been preparing ourselves to pray, and now we begin with prayer, properly so called, namely, the Lord's Prayer; which, being made by Jesus, and indited by his Spirit, deserved to stand in the first place, but that we were not fit to call God "Our Father" till we had repented of our sins against him: and, being thus prepared, we dare not omit it, because we are sure our Lord intended it, not only for a pattern to make other prayers by, when he said "After this manner pray ye," Matt. vi. 9; but as a form to be used in so many words: because, when he delivered it the second time, he says expressly, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," Luke xi. 1. Therefore St. Jerome saith, "It is recited in the Liturgy by our Lord's tradition:" St. Cyprian also, and divers other ancients, call it, "the daily prayer:" and all the primitive Liturgies have it in every one of their services; so that St. Augustin tells us, "in the Church of God it is daily used at the altar;" yea, the whole congregation joined in repeating it, as our rubrick requires now; for that father adds, "if any of you do not say this prayer, though you be present in body, you are out of the church."

kneeling[1], *and repeating it with him, both here, and wheresoever else it is used in Divine Service.*

OUR Father[2], which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As

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And, if we consider the style of it, we shall be convinced, that its divine Author intended it chiefly for public assemblies, it being, as St. Cyprian speaks, "a common prayer," and all its expressions so general, "Our Father, &c," "our daily bread, &c," that every man prays for others as well as himself, and exercises his charity, as well as his devotion. The phrases and particular sentences of it are all taken out of those forms, which were in use among the Jews in our Saviour's time, to shew that he liked not unnecessary novelty in prayer; but the whole composure is truly wonderful, being so short, that the meanest may learn it; so plain, that the most ignorant may understand it; and yet so full, that it comprehends all our wants, and intimates all our duty; shewing not only what is fit to be asked, but what manner of persons we that ask ought to be; whence Tertullian calls it, "the epitome of the Gospel:" as containing, our persuasion of God's love, our desire of his honour, our subjection to his authority, our submission to his will, and our dependence on his providence; our need of his mercy to pardon former offences, and of his grace to keep us from future sin, and of both, to deliver us from the punishment due unto them all; concluding with acts of faith and praise, and adoration. And being drawn up by our glorious Advocate, who knew his Father's treasures as well as our wants, it is certainly the most complete in itself, the most acceptable to God, and the most useful to us, of any form in the world; for which cause it ought to be united to all our offices, to make up their defects, and recommend them to our heavenly Father who cannot deny us, when we speak the very same words which his dear Son hath put in our mouths, if we use them with understanding and devotion. *Dean Comber.*

The church of Christ did use to begin and end her services with the Lord's Prayer. This being the foundation, upon which all other prayers should be built, therefore, saith Tertullian, we begin with it; that so the right foundation being laid, we may justly proceed to our ensuing requests. And it being the perfection of all prayer, therefore, saith St. Augustin, we conclude our prayers with it. Let no man therefore quarrel with the Church's frequent use of the Lord's Prayer: for the Church catholick ever did the same. Besides, as St. Cyprian observes, if we hope to have our prayers accepted of the Father only for his Son's sake, why should we not hope to have them most speedily accepted, when they are offered up in his Son's own words? *Bp. Sparrow, Dr. Hole.*

What part of the world soever we fall into, if Christian religion have been there received, the ordinary use of this very Prayer hath with equal continuance accompanied the same, as one of the principal and most material duties of honour done to Jesus Christ. Though men should speak with the tongues of angels, yet words so pleasing to the ears of God, as those which the Son of God himself hath composed, were not possible for men to frame. He therefore, which made us to live, hath also taught us to pray, to the end that, speaking unto the Father in his Son's own prescript form, we may be sure that we utter nothing which God will either disallow or deny. *Hooker.*

In conformity with the foregoing sentiments, it may be observed here once for all, that the Lord's Prayer may be placed at the beginning, or at the close, of any office or part of worship, with great propriety and advantage. For, when we begin with it, as after the Creed and in the Communion service, it, being perfect in its comprehension, presents to us at once all that we are about to pray for in the following petitions. Besides, having proceeded from the sacred lips of our Lord God, it hallows and consecrates all our other prayers, which must all grow out of this. On the other hand, when we close with it, as after the Litany, it being a summary recollection of all our foregoing requests, if we have through infirmity or negligence been wandering in the larger forms, we may now double our earnestness in this divine compendium. Accordingly the Church hath always shewn that deference to this Prayer, that she hath inserted it in every distinct office of the whole Liturgy: to this end, that by its perfection she might supply the defects, and atone for the infirmities, of her own composures. And it being added in this place after the Confession and Absolution, makes the whole, as it were, a short distinct office, which is now followed by one of another kind; namely, that of thanksgiving. What has been done hitherto has been penitential: it now opens into eucharistical. *Dr. Bisse.*

The service began with the Lord's Prayer in the first book of King Edward the Sixth. But our Reformers at the review of it, in 1551, added the Sentences, Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution, as judging it perhaps not so becoming in us to call God "Our Father," before we have repented of our disobedience against him, and asked pardon for our sins. *Wheatly, Dr. Bisse.* But it is a very proper time to address God in that form which our Saviour taught his disciples, when we have approved ourselves his real disciples by repentance of sins, and faith in the Gospel-offers of mercy. *Abp. Secker.* Most justly therefore has our Church injoined the use of it in this and other places, as the badge of our discipleship. Most justly also doth she injoin the people at all times to repeat it together with the minister: for by so doing they declare themselves our Lord's disciples, imitating at the same time the ancient practice, when the whole congregation vocally pronounced it all together. *Dr. Bennet.*

Confession of sin, strengthened by absolution, thus appearing to be the main ground of publick worship, upon which the acceptableness of the following service regularly depends; this should be one among many reasons for inducing us to give all diligence to come to church before the Confession; otherwise we lose the great benefit of absolution. For though there be other short confessions of sin, as in the Litany, yet there is appointed no other Absolution. *Dr. Bisse.*

It is a matter of just lamentation, that many, who profess to attend religious worship, come into church so

we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom[t], The power,

late after the beginning of divine service, as not only to lose the opportunity of joining in these preparations themselves, but frequently to disturb and incommode those who have already engaged in them. *Rogers.*

It has by some been thought, that the people are not to repeat the Lord's Prayer with the minister in the Communion office. But the words, "both here, and wheresoever else it is used in divine service," added to the rubrick at the last review, contain a plain general direction, which a thousand repetitions could not have made more express. *Shepherd.*

[q]—*with an audible voice;*] The Lord's Prayer is ordered to be said by the minister "with an audible," or, as in the former rubrick, "with a loud voice," chiefly, it seems, as a corrective of the practice of the Church of Rome, by which it is appointed to be said secretly or mentally. Another reason is, that ignorant persons might the sooner learn it: and that all the congregation might the better hear and join with the minister in that most excellent part of divine worship. *Dr. Bisse, L'Estrange.*

Till the last review there was no such direction: it having been the custom till then, for the minister to say the Lord's Prayer alone, in most of the offices, and for the people only to answer at the end of it, by way of response, "Deliver us from evil." And the better to prepare and give them notice of what they were to do, the minister was to elevate and raise his voice, when he came to the petition, "Lead us not into temptation," just as it is done still in the Roman Church; where the priest always pronounces the conclusion of every prayer with a voice louder than ordinary, that the people may know when to join their Amen. *Wheatly.*

It was however an ancient custom of the Church for the Lord's Prayer to be repeated with a loud voice. *Dr. Nicholls.*

[r]—*the people also kneeling,*] See page 8, note *q*, before the general Confession. That kneeling was a posture of religious worship or prayer to Almighty God amongst the Jews in the most ancient times, is evident from several passages in Scripture. In this posture Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii. 54; 2 Chron. vi. 13. The same posture Daniel used in his devotions, Dan. vi. 10. And Isaiah describes the worship of God by an expression derived from the same posture, Isa. xlv. 23. The same religious posture was used by our blessed Lord himself, Luke xxii. 41. The same by his apostles, and by other holy men amongst the first Christians: by St. Paul, Acts xx. 36; by St. Stephen, Acts vii. 60; by St. Peter, Acts ix. 40. And St. Paul expresses prayer, as Isaiah did, by the usual posture which accompanied it, Eph. iii. 14. The same posture was generally observed by the Christians of the first ages both in their publick and in their private devotions. *Dr. Nicholls.* The same observance of bodily worship practised by the Church on earth is also represented as the practice of the Church triumphant in heaven, Rev. vii. 11. And thus at our confessions of sin and at our prayers we present ourselves before God on our knees, by order of our Church, according to the example of our Saviour and of the Church of God. *Abp. King.*

[s] *Our Father,* &c.] The Lord's Prayer consists of three parts. First, a preface, expressing the goodness and greatness of him to whom we pray. Secondly, seven petitions, which by many learned persons are accounted but six, the two last being reckoned as one, because they nearly relate to one another. Of these the first three concern God's glory; namely, the honour of his name, the advancement of his authority, and the fulfilling of his will: and the four last concern our own good; being offered for temporal supplies, for remission of sins past, for prevention of future sins, and for deliverance from evils and miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. Thirdly, a doxology ascribing to God dominion and might, mercy and praise. *Clutterbuck.*

Paraphrase on the Lord's Prayer. We address ourselves to thee, O God, who by thy creation art the Father of us and all mankind, but art the particular Father of us Christians by adoption, Rom. viii. 15. Putting up our petitions to thee the great God, whose throne and place of especial residence is the highest heaven, Isa. lxvi. 1; Matt. xvi. 17. We do desire and will endeavour, that thy name, Ex. xx. 7, and whatsoever belongs to thee, may be hallowed, and kept free from all manner of contempt; and also be honoured by distinguishing marks of esteem. We likewise earnestly desire, and long for, the time, when thy kingdom of glory shall begin, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, 1 Cor. xv. 50; and into which the blessed of the Father are to enter, Matt. xxv. 34. We pray farther that we Christians here upon earth may perform the will of God, Mark iii. 35; Eph. v. 10; Rom. xii. 2; manifested to us by the preaching of the Gospel, with as much readiness and exactness as the angels of heaven perform it, Ps. ciii. 21; Matt. xviii. 10. We enlarge our petitions to beg a sufficiency of bread, 1 Tim. vi. 8; that is, food, raiment, and other necessaries of life, in such proportions as God is pleased to deal it out to us; beseeching thee to forgive our sins, great and small, both of which make us liable to God's eternal vengeance, Matt. xii. 36; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; as we on our part own, that we freely forgive all that have offended against us, knowing that God will pardon our sins upon no other condition, Matt. vi. 15. Lastly, we desire of thee that thou wouldest be pleased to hinder any strong temptation from being laid in our way, which it is not likely we shall have the power to overcome, Matt. xxvi. 41: or if it be, give us such a powerful assistance of thy grace, as may enable us to overcome it, 2 Cor. xii. 9. But deliver us from all evil, as well that of sin, Eph. ii. 1; Heb. x. 12, as that of misfortune, Ps. cvii. 41; Acts vii. 10; and as that arising from the malice of evil spirits, Job i. 6, 8; Rev. xii. 8. And these blessings we trust thou wilt grant us, thy adorable perfections giving us encouragement to expect them from thee; for thine is the kingdom and sovereign dominion over all things, and thou hast no one to controul thee, 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Jud. 25; thou art endowed with infinite power, and hast nothing to withstand thee, Job xxxviii. 11; Ps. lxv. 7;

and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

¶ *Then likewise he shall say*[u],

O Lord, open thou our lips[x].

and thine own glory is manifested in making us happy. *Dr. Nicholls.*

It is the case with this, as with all other prayers, that we must not expect God to listen to it, unless our life be in agreement with the matter of our petitions. It may here therefore be useful to observe, that every particular sentence and petition of the Lord's Prayer carries with it a corresponding duty. Thus when we address Almighty God as "Our Father," we are reminded to shew him that honour, which is his due; and to treat all men as our brethren, with kindness and brotherly love: and when we address him as peculiarly being in heaven, we are reminded of his infinite greatness, and of our own lowliness in comparison of him, "whose seat is in heaven, and whose kingdom ruleth over all," Ps. xi. 4; ciii. 19. The first petition, wherein we pray that "his name may be hallowed," teaches us, not to bring any dishonour upon it by our conduct, nor to treat it profanely or lightly, but to cause it to be glorified by the sincerity of our worship, and the goodness of our behaviour. By the second petition, which prays that God's "kingdom may come," we are taught, to live ourselves, and to encourage others in living, a holy life; that we may be worthy subjects of his kingdom on earth, and may be continually more fit, through our Saviour's merits, to enter into his heavenly kingdom. From the petition, that God's "will may be done," we should learn, to be diligent in doing his will; both by performing what he commands, and by abstaining from what he forbids; and, as far as we may be able, by causing his will to be done by others. As we pray God to "give us our daily bread," it should be our constant practice, to use those means, which he hath appointed, for procuring it, industriously and contentedly; and we should upon no account accept it from the devil, which we do, if we employ any dishonest means for bettering our condition. From the petition that God will "forgive us our trespasses," results the duty of repenting of them and forsaking them, together with that of "forgiving those who trespass against us." By the petition that God will not "lead us into temptation," but will "deliver us from evil," we are taught to struggle against every temptation, that we may meet with; to resist the first motion or inclination to commit sin; and above all, not to live in the practice of any thing which we know to be evil. Lastly, by the doxology in the conclusion of the prayer we are taught, to entertain a due reverence for that perfect Being, to whom belong "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory;" who "heareth not sinners," John ix. 31; but who heareth those who "worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 23; namely those who worship him with their hearts, and with the offering of a holy life. *Edit.*

[t] *For thine is the kingdom*, &c.] We conclude with the doxology, or form of giving praise to God, which is contained in St. Matthew's Gospel, vi. 13, and is expounded by the Greek Fathers, and therefore used by us here: but since it is left out by St. Luke's Gospel, xi. 4, and by most of the Latin Fathers, therefore we omit it sometimes, when the office is not matter of praise, as it is here after the Absolution. *Dean Comber.* It was appointed to be used in this place at the last review of the Common Prayer Book. *Wheatly.*

[u] *Then likewise he shall say*, &c.] Having presumed in the foregoing solemn words to claim God for our Father through Christ, we now proceed to vent the joy and thankfulness belonging to such a privilege, which is the second part of our publick service, as it was in the ancient Church; where, St. Basil informs us, the people, after confession, rose from prayer, and went on to psalmody. But to make the transition more natural and beneficial, we first beg, that God would permit and assist us, unworthy as we are, to pay him this homage. And this we do in the short sentences which follow. *Abp. Secker.*

It was a very ancient practice of the Jews to recite their publick hymns and prayers by course, and many of the Fathers assure us that the primitive Christians imitated them therein: so that there is no old liturgy, which does not contain such short and devout sentences as these, wherein the people answer the priest, and which are therefore called "Responses." This primitive usage, which is now excluded not only from popish assemblies by their praying in an unknown tongue, but also from those of our protestant dissenters by the device of a long extempore prayer, is still maintained in the Church of England: which allows the people their ancient right of bearing part in the service for these good reasons: First, hereby the consent of the congregation to what we pray for is declared; and it is this unity of mind and voice, and this agreement in prayer, which hath the promise of prevailing, Rom. xv. 6; Matt. xviii. 19. Secondly, this grateful variety and different manner of address serves to quicken the people's devotion. Thirdly, it engages their attention, which is apt to wander, especially in sacred things; and, since they have a duty to perform, causes them to be expectant and ready to perform it. Let all those then, who attend the publick service, gratefully embrace the privilege which the Church allows them, and make their responses gravely and with an audible voice. *Dean Comber.*

But it must be remembered, both here and elsewhere, when our prayers to God are divided into such small portions as we call "versicles," that the people are to join *mentally* in that part which the minister utters, as well as in that which they are directed to pronounce themselves. And so the minister in like manner must join in what the people utter, as well as in his own part. For otherwise they do not join in prayer. Besides, if this be not done, we shall frequently offer to God that which has but an imperfect sense. For instance, in this place, these words, "and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise," do so manifestly depend upon what the minister spake just before, that the sense of the one is not perfect without the other. It is true, the church requires, that the minister shall say the one, and the people the other portion; that is, the one portion shall be vocally uttered by the minister, and the other portion shall be vocally uttered by the people, alternately and by way of responses; but yet both the minister and the people ought mentally to offer, and to speak to God, what is vocally offered and spoken

Answer. And our mouth shall
Ps. li. 15. shew forth thy praise[y].

Priest. O God, make speed to
save us.

by the other party respectively, for the reasons already given. And, that both the minister and the congregation may be the better able to do this, they should respectively take care, that they do not confound and disturb each other by beginning their several portions too soon. The minister's first versicle should be finished, before the people utter a word of the second; and the people should have time enough to finish the second, before the minister begins the third, &c.: so that both the minister and people may have time enough deliberately to offer every portion, and make, all of them together, one continued act of devotion. The same rule must be observed in all those psalms and hymns, which are used alternately. *Dr. Bennet.*

[x] *O Lord, open thou our lips*, &c.] The responses here prescribed consist of prayers and praises: the two first are prayers taken out of David's Psalms, the great storehouse of primitive devotion. The first is from Ps. li. 15. This sentence is very frequent in ancient liturgies, particularly in those of St. James and St. Chrysostom; and it is fitly placed here, with respect to those sins we lately confessed, for it is part of David's penitential Psalm, who had looked on his guilt so long, till shame, and grief, and the fear of punishment which followed thereupon, had almost sealed up his lips and made him speechless; so that he could not praise God as he desired, unless it pleased God, by speaking peace to his soul, to remove those terrors, and then his lips would be opened and his mouth ready to praise the Lord. And, if we be fully sensible of our guilt, as we ought to be, it will be necessary for us to beg such evidences of our pardon, as may free us from the terrors which seal up our lips, and then we shall be fit to praise God heartily in the psalms which follow.

The second is from Ps. lxx. 1; and xl. 13: "O God make speed, &c." this also is of ancient use in the Western Church; and it is the paraphrase of that remarkable supplication, namely "Hosannah," which signifies, "Save now, Lord, we beseech thee," Ps. cxviii. 25. When with David, xl. 12, we look back to those innumerable evils, that have taken hold of us, we cry to God to save us speedily from them by his mercy; and when we look forward to the duties we are about to do, we pray as earnestly that he will make haste to help us by his grace without which we cannot do any acceptable service: both which are necessary for us just now; and that is the reason why we are so importunate for a speedy answer.

The other two responses are acts of praise. Upon supposition, that our pardon is granted, we rise up with joy to sing. First "Glory be to the Father," &c: which excellent hymn, though it be not the very words of Scripture, yet it is a paraphrase upon the song of the Seraphim, "Holy, Holy, Holy," Isa. vi. 3; and gives equal worship to every Person of the Trinity, because each Person is very God, 1 John v. 7. It was a custom from the beginning of Christianity, as the Fathers shew, to "give glory to the only Father, with the Son and the Holy Ghost;" which orthodox form the Arian heretics attempted to change into "Glory be to the Father, by the Son, and in the Holy Ghost:" whereupon the Church enlarged the old form, and annexed it to their Liturgies in this form, "Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and ever, world without end:" and so the Greek Church now uses it; to which the Western Church added, in a council, in the year of our Lord 442, "As it was in the beginning," to shew this was the primitive faith, and the old orthodox way of praising God. And to this very day it serves for these two uses. First, as a shorter creed and confession of our believing in three Persons and one God, whereby we both declare ourselves to be in the communion of the Catholick Church, and also renounce all hereticks, who deny this great and distinguishing article of our faith. Secondly, it serves for a hymn of praise; by which we magnify the Father for our creation, the Son for our redemption, and the Holy Ghost for our sanctification; and to quicken us herein, we declare it was so "in the beginning," for the angels sang the praises of the Trinity in the morning of the creation, Job xxxviii. 7; the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, saints and martyrs, did thus worship God from the beginning; the whole Church militant and triumphant doth it now, and shall do it for ever, not only in this world, but in that which is without end. Let us therefore with great devotion join with this blessed company in so good a work, and give glory to the Father who granted our pardon, to the Son who purchased it, and to the Holy Ghost who sealed it. Let every Person of the glorious Trinity have due praise; and, as God is not weary with repeating his blessings, let us never be weary in repeating this hymn, but in psalms, litanies, or wherever we find it, let us say it with a fresh sense of God's infinite love, for he justly deserves our most hearty praises: Amen.

Secondly: "Praise ye the Lord," &c; which is no other but the English of "Hallelujah," a word so sacred that St. John retains it, Rev. xix. 1, 3, 4, 6; and St. Augustin saith, the church of old scrupled to translate it. The use of it is frequent in the psalms, being the title to, and the conclusion of, many of them; particularly of six psalms, which were the Paschal hymn, and called the great Hallelujah, Ps. cxiii—cxviii. And among the Christians it was so usual to sing Hallelujah, that St. Jerome saith little children were acquainted with it. The solemn times of singing it among divers churches were different; but it was used every where on the Lord's day; and among us it is used every day, and placed here, first, as a return to the Gloria Patri, for in that we worship the Trinity, as we do the unity in this: secondly, as a triumphant hymn upon the joyful news of our absolution, and the overthrow of our spiritual enemies, for which saith the priest to the people, "Praise ye the Lord," and they readily obey him replying, "The Lord's name be praised." Thirdly, it is a proper preface to the Psalms, called in the Hebrew, "The Book of Praises." The office hath been thus far penitential, and now it becomes eucharistical; what more proper introduction can there be than this Hallelujah? *Dean Comber.*

[y] *And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.*] This is the answer of all the people. And by making this an-

Answer. O Lord, make haste to
Ps. lxx. 1. help us.

¶ *Here all standing up*[z], *the Priest shall say,*

Rom. xvi. 27. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Is. vi. 3. 1 John v. 7. Rev. iv. 8. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

Answer. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Job xxxviii. 7. Matt. xxviii. 19. Ps. civ. 31.

Priest. Praise ye the Lord.

Answer. The Lord's Name be praised.

Ps. cxiii. 1, 2.

¶ *Then shall be said or sung this Psalm*[a] *following*[b] *:*

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swer they promise here and undertake for themselves, that they will not sit still to hear the psalms and hymns read only to them, as matter of their instruction; but that they will bear a part in them with the priest, and keep up the old custom still of singing, and answering verse by verse, as being specially appointed for the setting forth of God's praise; whereunto they are presently invited again by the minister in these words, "Praise ye the Lord." So that our manner of singing by sides, or all together, or in several parts, or in the people's answering the priest in repeating the psalms and hymns, is here grounded. But if the minister say alone, in vain was it for God's people to promise God, and to say, that their mouth also should shew forth his praise. *Bp. Cosins.*

If we were to enter into this part of our devotional exercises as we ought to do, it would spiritualize our joy, and help us, both in heart and voice, to glorify our Father which is in heaven. If we do not enter into it as we ought to do, it is because we often come before the divine presence without thought and without reflexion. We think not of his hand, nor consider the glory of his majesty. We forget our own spiritual necessities, and are therefore regardless of his inexhaustible treasures. And, when we are within the walls of his house, and professedly engaged in his service, we too frequently suffer our thoughts to rove, and our hearts to wander after things that cannot profit. It is not designed that our praises and thanksgivings should be expressed in a noisy and boisterous style; far from it. But that sincerity of heart, and a zeal according to knowledge, should be exercised by every worshipper, who would praise God with acceptance. *Rogers.*

[z] *—all standing up,*] It was the practice of the primitive church to perform those parts of the publick service, which were not celebrated kneeling, in the posture of standing: for this was another way of respectful worship paid to Almighty God in the acts of prayer and thanksgiving, used anciently in the Jewish church, and thence derived to the Christian. See Mark xi. 25; Luke xviii. 11, 13. *Dr. Nicholls.*

Standing is certainly a very proper posture for the praises of God. For every body not only hears them, but ought to bear a part therein. Now though sitting may be allowed when we only hear, as whilst the Lessons, &c, are read; yet, since in praises every member of the congregation is not barely passive, but also active and employed; therefore such a posture becomes them, as betokens their being concerned in that part of worship. And it is notorious, that their standing up together looks as if they had something to do themselves, and that they were not merely attending to others.

But besides, in the use of David's Psalms diverse such passages do very frequently occur, as every good Christian may, and therefore should, personally address and speak to God. Those divine compositions are every where full of the most pious breathings, the most devout and pathetical ejaculations; and a well disposed person cannot forbear lifting up his heart in those expressions, and adopting them for his own prayers. Now kneeling is not a proper posture for such parts of the Psalms as are not directed to God: and sitting is a most indecent posture for such parts thereof as are directed to him, as all sober Christians do confess: but standing does tolerably well suit both parts, though it is not the very best for one of them. And therefore since both these parts, namely those which are, and those which are not, directed to God, are so commonly, and so suddenly, altered, mingled, and interwoven the one with the other, that the most suitable postures for each of them cannot be always used; certainly that one posture, which best suits with both together, ought always to be preferred.

It should be added, that the minister ought not to begin the Doxology in this place too soon, for fear the people should be hurried, and not have time enough to rise from their knees, and join mentally with him in the former part thereof. *Dr. Bennet.*

[a] *Then shall be said or sung this Psalm*] The Church orders this and the other psalms to be either said or sung, as the people are best able to offer them: not being willing to lay a greater restraint upon them than the Scripture has done, in which we have examples for both these ways of praising God. Thus the praises of God were celebrated in the Jewish church by "singing," 2 Chron. xxix. 30; and afterwards in the Christian Church, as appears from the language of St. Paul, Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16. And, not to insist on those places which seem to require us to "say psalms," such as Ps. cxviii. 2, Bible translation, we find in Scripture several sacred hymns, particularly of Hannah, the blessed Virgin, Zacharias, and Simeon, and the saints in heaven, Rev. vii. 12; xi. 17, which are related to have been "said" by them respectively; and the circumstances in the story do not make it probable that they were sung. *Abp. King.*

The words "sung or said" every where signify the same as "minister and people." The word, "sung," relates to a hymn in parts; as in choir service, one side "singing" one verse, and the other another: and the word, "said," relates only to the parochial service. *Collis.*

[b] *—this Psalm following:*] This psalm is called in the Latin service "The Invitatory psalm." Some have mistaken, and supposed the first verse of it to be the Invitatorium; which was a select text of Scripture, generally adapted to the day, and used just before this psalm, and frequently repeated in the course of it: but our Reformers, judging this to be a vain tautology, thought fit to omit it, appointing the psalm to be used without the invitatory. *Dr. Nicholls, L'Estrange.*

This is an invitatory psalm; for herein we do mutually invite and call upon one another, being come

except on Easter-Day [c], *upon which another Anthem* [d] *is appointed; and on the Nineteenth day of every Month it is not to be read here, but in the ordinary Course of the Psalms.*

before his presence, to sing to the Lord, to set forth his praises, to hear his voice, as with joy and cheerfulness, so with that reverence that becomes his infinite Majesty, worshipping, falling down, and kneeling before him, using all humble behaviour in each part of his service and worship prescribed to us by his church. And needful it is that the Church should call upon us for this duty; for most of us forget the Psalmist's counsel, Ps. xcvi. 8, 9, "To ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his name." Unto his courts we come before the presence of the Lord of the whole earth, and forget to "worship him in the beauty of holiness." *Bp. Sparrow.*

This psalm, containing directions and exhortations to prayer, to praise God, and to hear his holy word, is a very proper preparatory for the following duties, and the matter of it shews it was designed at first for the publick service, on the feast of tabernacles, as some think, or on the sabbath-day, as others say; but St. Paul judges it fit for every day, while it is called to day, Heb. iii. 15: and so it hath been used in all the Christian world, as the Liturgy of St. Basil testifies for the Greek Church; the testimony of St. Augustin witnesses for the African Church; and for the Western Church, all its ancient offices retain it, and in the capitulars it is called the invitatory psalm; yea, the very Jewish doctors have confessed it belongs to the times of Messiah, and therefore our Reformers did very prudently place it here, before the psalms, collects, and lessons. It contains a threefold exhortation: first, to praise God; shewing, 1. the manner how, namely, externally and internally; ver. 1, 2; and, 2. the reason why, namely, because of his infinite greatness, ver. 3, and his mighty power, declared by his providence over all, ver. 4, and his creating of all, ver. 5. The second exhortation is to pray to this mighty God; as to the manner, very humbly, ver. 6; giving the reason for it, because it is his due from us, ver. 7. The third exhortation is to hear his word; directing us to the manner, namely, speedily, willingly, and with tender hearts, ver. 8; and warning us by the example of the Jews, whose sin is set before us, ver. 9, and their punishments, ver. 10, and 11; that we may not destroy our souls, by despising and distrusting God's word as they did. *Dean Comber.*

It is a pleasing sight, a cause of real joy, to every one that has any regard for the honour of God and the welfare of immortal souls, to see numbers resorting to the house of prayer for the solemn purpose of divine worship. And this pleasure is greatly heightened by seeing them, when assembled, zealously complying with this exhortation: uniting, as with one heart and one voice, in the most lively and affectionate manner, to praise the God of their life, and to make their cheerful acknowledgments to the Author of all their blessings. To be present in a numerous congregation, devoutly engaged in celebrating the goodness and loving-kindness of the Lord, is calculated to give us a more affecting idea of the blessedness of heaven, than any other scene in the present world. "O come then, let us sing unto the Lord;" and let us not be satisfied with doing this merely with our lips: but "let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation." *Rogers.*

[c] —*except on Easter-day,*] See the note on the service for that day among the collects &c.

[d] —*another Anthem*] An anthem is supposed to come from Antiphon, and to signify an hymn, sung in parts or alternately: and in this sense the invitatory psalm is here called "an anthem;" for so much is implied in the direction, that for Easter-day "another Anthem" is appointed. *Dr. Bisse.*

As the Scriptures prescribe us the use of psalms in the praises of God, so they encourage us to offer those praises by way of responses, or answering. For this we have the best example that can be desired, even the blessed angels and glorified saints. So in Isaiah, vi. 3, "And one cried unto another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." And the Church triumphant through the whole Revelation is, I think, constantly represented praising God after this manner. See chap. vii. 9, 10, 12; xix. 1—6. I make no question but this is taken by allusion from the manner of the Church's praising God on earth: and it is agreeable to St. Paul's command of "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms &c;" which supposes every one to have a share in them, either by turns, or by bearing a part. This way of praising God by answering one another is the most ancient we find in Scripture: for thus Miriam praised God, Exod. xv. 21: and the last song recorded in Scripture is of the same sort, Rev. xix, as before mentioned. According to these Scripture examples the people are allowed to bear their part in the Psalms, and either to sing or say them by way of answering. *Abp. King.*

Some of our dissenting brethren have thought, and so have some papists, that dividing this, and other parts of the service, as we do, between the priest and the congregation; and allowing the latter to make responses, or answers; is permitting, not only laymen, but even women, against an express prohibition of Scripture, to encroach on the ministerial office, makes a disagreeable confused noise, and hinders many from understanding what is said. But surely the office of the minister is sufficiently distinguished, as he presides and leads, throughout the service. And why should not the people be suffered to follow him, and bear some part with their voices in praying, as well as the main part in singing? Not to say, that the principal article, in which they do bear a part, is the "Psalms" for the day, which were designed to be sung, where it could be done conveniently. No Scripture forbids the congregation to bear a part: that which forbids women to speak in the church, 1 Cor. xiv. 35, means only to forbid their giving instruction, or entering into questions or disputations there. And St. Paul commands us to "speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," Eph. v. 19. Accordingly the primitive Christians are known to have used this alternate manner in their public prayers and praises. And though, when the psalms and hymns are spoken thus, and not sung, there is nothing harmonious in the sound, yet St. John describes the worship of the blessed above by the "voice of many waters and of a great thunder," Rev. xiv. 2; which is no unfit comparison for the united answers of a large congregation. As to the other part of the objection, this method in reality creates

Venite, exultemus Domino[e]. Ps. xcv.

O Come, let us sing[f] unto the Lord : let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving : and shew ourselves glad in him with Psalms.

For the Lord is a great God : and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth : and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it : and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship, and fall down : and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is the Lord our God : and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts : as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness ;

When your fathers tempted me : proved me, and saw my works.

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said : It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways.

Unto whom I sware in my wrath : that they should not enter into my rest.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then shall follow the Psalms*[g] *in order as they are*

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no confusion or difficulty at all. A very little practice will render it easy to any one that can read: even they, who cannot read, may join in it, by attending to those near them, or to the clerk; it makes a grateful variety, keeps attention awake, and enlivens devotion. In this manner then we glorify God: beginning always with the 95th Psalm, as the whole Christian Church did in early ages, and as the nature of the Psalm recommends to us: it being a distinct invitation to the several duties of praise, prayer, and hearing, with an awful warning of the danger of neglecting God, drawn from his judgments on the disobedient Jews, unto whom "these things happened for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition." 1 Cor. x. 11. *Abp. Secker.*

[e] *Venite, exultemus Domino.*] These are the words at the beginning of the Latin version, answering to "O come, let us sing unto the Lord:" from them the Psalm is sometimes called "the Venite," or "the Venite exultemus."

[f] *O come, let us sing* &c.] The general purport of this psalm has been already stated. With respect to some particular phrases in it, we may remark, that when we call God in it "the strength of our salvation," we mean, that by his power alone we can be saved from present and future evils. When we call him "a great King above all gods:" we mean, above all that have ever had that name ascribed to them: the princes of the nations; the false deities of the heathen; Satan "the god of this world," 2 Cor. iv. 4; and the holy angels in heaven. When we say, that "in his hands are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is his also;" we mean, that his presence and his influence extend to the remotest and most inaccessible places; and there is none, where he cannot deliver or punish. When we call ourselves "the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand;" we own our Maker to be likewise our Preserver, Supporter, and Director; who feeds our souls by his word and his grace, as well as our bodies with daily bread, and guides us mercifully through this world to a better. "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," is an affecting and alarming exhortation, that, if we design ever to become his servants in earnest, we should hearken immediately to his continual calls; else, through a habit of disobedience, our minds may grow callous, and "past feeling." Eph. iv. 19. The words "when your fathers tempted me," which are put into the mouth of God himself, the "Jews," for whom first this Psalm was composed, were to understand literally, of their fathers according to the flesh. But we are to take them of those, who have gone before us in the profession of religion: and whom we are not to resemble in "tempting and proving" God, that is, doubting, and putting to unreasonable trials, his omnipotence, his goodness, and truth: lest, as the unbelieving "Jews" died in the wilderness, and so were excluded from the temporal rest, which otherwise they would have enjoyed in the land of Canaan, we also be excluded from what it prefigured, that eternal rest, which "remains for the people of God" in heaven. *Abp. Secker.*

[g] *Then shall follow the Psalms* &c.] The book of Psalms is a collection of praises and prayers, indited by the Spirit, composed by holy men on various occasions, and admirably suited to publick worship. They contain variety of devotions agreeable to all degrees and conditions of men, so that, without much difficulty, every man may apply them to his own case, either directly or by way of accommodation; for which cause, the Church useth these oftener than any other part of the Scripture. It is certain, the temple service consisted chiefly of forms

appointed. And at the end of every Psalm[h] *throughout the Year, and likewise at the end of* Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, *and* Nunc dimittis, *shall be repeated,*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

Answer. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then*[i] *shall be read distinctly with an audible voice the First Lesson*[k], *taken out of the Old Testament,*

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taken out of this book of Psalms, 1 Chron. xvi. 1, 7—37; 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2; and the prayers of the modern Jews are also most chiefly gathered from thence. The Christians undoubtedly used them in their publick service in the apostles' times, 1 Cor. xiv. 26; Col. iii. 16; and in the following ages it is plain, that they sang the Psalms in the church by turns, each side answering the other: indeed it appears the Psalms were placed about the beginning of the prayers, soon after the Confession; and that they were so often repeated at church, that the poorest Christians could say them by heart, and used to sing them at their labours, in their houses, and in the fields. The author of them, holy David, first set them to vocal and instrumental musick; and pious antiquity did use them in their assemblies with musick also; and so we may very fitly do, where we have convenience, for this makes our churches the very emblem of the heavenly choir, which is always represented as praising God in this manner: and experience shews, that musick works very much on the affections of well tempered men; it calms their minds; composes their thoughts; excites their devotion; and fills their soul with a mighty pleasure, while they thus set forth his praise.

The Church having thus fitted the Psalms for daily use, it is our duty to say or sing them with great devotion; and, if we have performed the foregoing parts of the Liturgy as we ought, nothing can fit us better to sing David's Psalms with David's spirit; for all that hath been done hitherto was to tune our hearts, that we may say, "O God, my heart is ready," or "fixed, I will sing and give praise," Ps. cviii. 1. And, as St. Basil notes, this frame of spirit is more necessary in the use of the Psalms, than of any other part of Scripture, the rest being only read to us, but every man is to repeat these as his own words. *Dean Comber.*

For more concerning the Psalms, see the notes introductory to that division of the Common Prayer Book.

As it is so primitive and useful an order to have the Psalms thus read; and as this "Psalter" is an entire body of devotion, having different forms, to exercise several graces, by way of internal act and spiritual intentions, containing in it, confessions, thanksgivings, prayers, praises, and intercessions; let every one be sure to do it standing, sitting being only allowed, whilst the Lessons or the Epistle is reading. *Collis.*

[h] —*at the end of every Psalm* &c.] We are directed to praise, glorify, and confess to God every day in a certain number of Psalms of his own appointment, out of the Old Testament; and then in such hymns as are recorded in the New. But inasmuch as the mystery of the holy Trinity is more explicitly revealed to us under the Gospel, than it was to those under the Law, therefore our Church requires us to annex to every psalm and hymn "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be;" to signify our belief, that the same God was worshipped by them as by us; the same God, that is glorified in the Psalms, having been from the beginning "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," as well as now. So that our ascribing this glory expressly to the three Persons, in whose name we are baptized, is not any real addition to the Psalms, but is a necessary expedient for turning the Jewish psalms into Christian hymns, and so fitting them for the use of the church now, as they were before for the use of the synagogue. *Abp. King.*

Touching the hymn of glory, our usual conclusion to psalms, the glory of all things is that wherein their highest perfection doth consist; and the glory of God, that divine excellency, whereby he is eminent above all things, his omnipotent, infinite, and eternal being, which angels and glorified saints do intuitively behold; we on earth apprehend principally by faith, in part also by that kind of knowledge which groweth from experience of those effects, the greatness whereof exceedeth the powers and abilities of all creatures both in heaven and earth. God is glorified, when such his excellency above all things is with due admiration acknowledged. Which dutiful acknowledgment of God's excellency by occasion of special effects being the very proper subject, and almost the only matter purposely treated of in all psalms, if that joyful hymn of glory have any use in the Church of God, whose name we therewith extol and magnify, can we place it more fitly than where now it serveth as a close or conclusion to psalms? Neither is the form thereof newly or unnecessarily invented. "We must (saith St. Basil) as we have received, even so baptize; and as we baptize, even so believe; and as we believe, even so give glory." Baptizing we use the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: confessing the Christian faith, we declare our belief in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost: ascribing glory unto God, we give it to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. It is the token of a true and sound understanding for matter of doctrine about the Trinity, when in ministering baptism, and making confession, and giving glory, there is a conjunction of all three, and no one of the three severed from the other two. *Hooker.*

[i] *Then* &c.] After the Psalms, it hath long been customary for the organ, where one is used, to play for a short time: and, as instruments of musick in divine service are certainly lawful, else they had not been appointed in the Jewish, or permitted in the ancient Christian Church, or described in the Revelation as accompanying the praises of the blessed above, so a little pause for the use of this instrument will not only give some respite and refreshment to the congregation, and to the minister, but may be advantageously employed, either to reflect on what is past of the service, or prepare our minds for what is to come. And therefore it should not be filled up, either by the performer with the lighter airs of musick instead of solemn strains and such as may excite proper dispositions, or by any of the congregation with needless

as is appointed in the Calendar[l], *except there be proper Lessons*[m] *assigned for that day: He that readeth so standing*[n] *and turning himself*[o], *as he may best be heard*[p] *of all such as are present. And*

discourse, or such private thoughts or imaginations, as blot out good impressions already made, and indispose us for receiving the like afterwards. *Abp. Secker.*

[k] *Then shall be read distinctly with an audible voice the First Lesson*, &c.] "Distinctly," that the reader may be the better understood: "with an audible voice," that he may be the better heard. *Dr. Hole.*

After the Psalms follow the Lessons. For having, according to the Exhortation, "set forth God's most worthy praise," we proceed to "hear his most holy word." And then a respite is given to the bent of the mind: for, whereas in the work of praising it was active, in hearing it is only attentive. Besides, a different faculty of the soul is now called into employment. In the Psalms the will and affections were employed: but now in the Lessons chiefly the understanding. And, as with the members of the body, so with the faculties of the mind, a change of employment prevents weariness, and affords relief. *Dr. Bisse, Dr. Bennet.* He, which prayeth in due sort, is thereby made the more attentive to hear; and he, which heareth, the more earnest to pray. *Hooker.*

That they, who are blessed with a revelation from God, should read and hear it with reverence, when they assemble to worship him, is a plain dictate of reason and religion. Accordingly the Jews "read Moses and the Prophets in their synagogues of old time," as the book of Acts informs us, Acts xiii. 27, xv. 21; and so indeed do writers of their own, in the same age with it: who boast of the practice as a most useful and honourable distinction peculiar to their nation, that the laws of life were thus published to all the people. The primitive Christians, as one of the earliest apologists for them, Justin Martyr, tells us, read at their meeting, both the Jewish prophets, and the writings of the apostles, in proper portions. And when the Church of Rome had broken them into small fragments, interrupted with other things; and had continued to read even these in Latin, after it was no longer understood; our Church rectified both errors; and hath taken care that the Old Testament should be gone through once a year and the New thrice. Only we omit some parts of the former; which are repetitions of what is related in other parts, or bare lists of genealogies and families, or too mystical and abstruse to be edifying in publick; on which last account we omit also the book of Revelation, excepting two or three chapters: matters of such difficulty being wisely thought fitter for the private meditation and study of those, who are qualified to engage in them.

The order, in which the books of both Testaments are read, is that in which they stand. Only in the Old, the Prophet Isaiah, containing the fullest predictions of Christ's coming and kingdom, is placed at the approach of his nativity: and in the New, the Gospels and Acts are the Lessons for the morning, and the Epistles for the afternoon. In this manner we make provision for every day in the year: and hence one great recommendation of daily attendance on public prayers, where there are opportunities for it, is, that by means of it we shall proceed regularly through the sacred writings, and preserve the due connection of the several discoveries, made in them to man. But for the first Lessons on Sundays, those chapters of the Old Testament are selected, which appear to be most useful. The second Lessons being from the New, there was no necessity, and little room, for choice. And to Holydays such portions of both are adapted, as best agree with the occasion. *Abp. Secker.*

Whilst the Scriptures are reading, the people should not be conversing with each other, or disregarding them: but should reverently attend to what is read, considering that it is the Word of God, which is the rule of their duty, and by which they shall be judged at the last day. And whensoever any thing applies to their own case, whether it be instruction or correction, comfort or reproof, let them take particular care thereof, and treasure it up in honest hearts, and endeavour to conduct themselves according to it in the whole course of their conversation. Thus the publick reading of God's word will become truly profitable, and they will have reason to return God special thanks for every opportunity of hearing it: whereas otherwise it will only aggravate their sins, and increase their condemnation. *Dr. Bennet.*

[l] *—out of the Old Testament, as is appointed in the Calendar*,] It is plain therefore, that the Apocryphal Lessons, though not expressly mentioned, are to be read by virtue of this rubrick, as it is explained by comparison with the Calendar. *Dr. Bennet.* With respect to these books it may be observed, that they are read in the congregation, not as divine, but as venerable for their antiquity, and for the spirit of religion that breathes in them; that the doctrine of them in the main is excellent, and the narrations instructive; that they were quoted with respect in the first ages of Christianity; that they were read in publick from very early ages; that it would have given great and needless offence at the Reformation to have left them out intirely; and that they are never appointed for the Lord's day. At least the second Lessons are at all times canonical Scripture: of which a great deal more is read, besides the Psalms, even in those of our churches which have not week-day prayers, than in any one congregation not of the Church of England. *Abp. Secker.*

[m] *—except there be proper Lessons* &c.] The course of the first Lessons for Sundays is different from that for week-days. From Advent Sunday to Septuagesima Sunday some particular chapters out of Isaiah are appointed, as containing the clearest prophecies of Christ. But upon Septuagesima Sunday Genesis is begun: because then begins the time of penance and mortification, to which Genesis suits best, as treating of the original of our misery by the fall of Adam, and of God's severe judgment upon the world for sin. For which reason the reading of this book was affixed to Lent, even in the primitive ages of the Church. Then are read forward the books as they lie in order; not all the books, but, because more can attend the publick worship of God on Sundays than upon any other days, such particular chapters are selected, as are judged most edifying to all that are present. And if any Sunday be, as some call it, a privileged day, namely, if it hath the history of it expressed in Scripture, such as Easter-day, Whit-Sunday, &c, there are peculiar and proper Lessons appointed.

after that, shall be said or sung, in English, the Hymn[s] called Te Deum Laudamus, *daily throughout the Year.*

¶ *Note, that before every Lesson the Minister shall say[t], Here beginneth such a Chapter, or Verse of such a Chapter, of such a Book: And after every Lesson, Here endeth the First, or the Second Lesson.*

Te Deum[s] Laudamus.

WE praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. Ps. cxxxv. 1, 2, 5.

All the earth doth worship thee: the Father everlasting. Gen. xxi. 33.

Upon Saints'-days another order is observed: for upon them the Church appoints Lessons out of the moral books, such as the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, and Wisdom, which, containing excellent instructions of life and conversation, are fit to be read upon days of saints, whose exemplary lives and deaths are the causes of the Church's solemn commemoration of them, and commendation of them to us.

Other holydays, such as Christmas-day, the Circumcision, the Epiphany, &c, have proper Lessons appointed suitable to the occasions.

And, as for the second Lessons, though generally the Church observes the same course on Sundays as on week-days, yet on some particular holydays and saints'-days such Lessons are appointed, as either explain the mystery, relate the event commemorated, or apply the example. *Wheatly.*

The proper Lessons are very well chosen, especially those for particular occasions; some of which, particularly Gen. xxii. for Good-Friday, are the same which the Church used in St. Augustin's time. *Dean Comber.*

[q] *He that readeth so standing*] When our Saviour read in the synagogue at Nazareth, Luke iv. 16, "he stood up for to read:" hereby shewing the decent regard and reverence to be evidenced towards holy Scripture. From which example of our Saviour, the Church hath ordered the same posture to be used by the minister in reading the Scriptures. *Dr. Hole.* Or, the Scripture being the word of God, and so a declaration of his will, the reading of it to the people is an act of authority, and therefore the minister that reads the Lessons is to stand. *Wheatly.*

[r] *—and turning himself,*] That is, towards the people: whence it appears that before the Lesson he looked from the people. This was the ancient custom of the Church of England, that the officiating minister in all those parts of the service, which were directed to the people, turned himself towards them, as in the Absolution, the Benediction, the reading of the Lessons, and of the holy Commandments. But in those parts of the office, which were directed to God immediately, as prayers, hymns, lauds, confessions of faith or of sins, he turned from the people: and for that purpose, in many parish churches of late, the reading pew had one desk for the Bible, looking towards the people to the body of the church; another for the Prayer-book, looking towards the east or upper end of the chancel. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[s] *—as he may best be heard*] A small pause here may be useful, that the congregation may be seated and perfectly quiet before the Lesson begins; to the end that all present may distinctly hear the whole of it, and the greater respect and reverence be shown to the word of God. *Dr. Bennet.*

[t] *—the Hymn*] It is certain from holy Scripture that the Christians were wont to sing hymns in the apostles' times; and it is probable that Ignatius appointed them to be sung by each side of the choir: since Pliny writing at that time to the Emperor Trajan reports, that the Christians used then to sing verses to Christ by turns, which was not much above one hundred years after our Saviour. And it is probable the place of these Hymns was, as now, after the Lessons: for St. Ambrose notes, that as, after one angel had published the Gospel, a multitude joined with him in praising God; so, when one minister hath read the Gospel, all the faithful glorify God. And St. Augustin observes, that a Psalm followed the Lesson out of the Old Testament. Not much unlike was that constitution of the Council of Laodicea, in the year 365, that a Lesson should be read, and then a Psalm sung, that by this variety the people might be secured against weariness and distraction. But, besides antiquity, there is great reason for this interposition of Hymns in respect to the great benefit we may receive from the word of God, for which we do daily praise him; and, if we bless him for our daily food of meat and drink, how much more are we obliged to glorify him for the food of our souls? As for the particular Hymns, they are, as of old in the primitive church, generally taken out of the Scripture; yet, as they did also make use of some Hymns composed by inspired and extraordinary men, so do we. *Dean Comber.*

When we sing or say these Hymns we stand, which is the proper posture for thanksgivings and praises, Ps. cxxxiv. 1; 2 Chron. vii. 6. The erection of the body fitly expresses the lifting up of the heart in joy. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[u] *Note, that before every Lesson the Minister shall say,* &c.] The reason of this notice appears to be, that any of the congregation, who are furnished with Bibles, may look out the Lessons, and so quicken their attention by reading them with the minister. The words to be used by him are, "Here beginneth such a chapter, &c;" and not "The first Lesson appointed for this morning's service, &c." *Collis.*

It may be said perhaps that there is no great reason, considering how many things are left in the Liturgy to our discretion, that we should be directed in such minute particulars as these are. Why may we not, for instance, be intrusted with using our own manner of introducing a Lesson out of the Bible, or a portion of Scripture to be read at the altar, but the very words must be prescribed us? True: And yet I must needs say that he is both conceited and presumptuous, who is above following rule, when it is given, even in these little matters: especially when the command is positive and express, as it is upon supposition in all the rubricks of this class. *Archdeacon Sharp.*

[s] *Te Deum*] This ancient and excellent hymn is said to have been composed by St. Ambrose, and first sung

Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. vii. 11, 12. Nehem. ix. 6, 7. To thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens[t], and all the Powers therein.

To thee Cherubin, and Seraphin: continually do cry, Is. vi. 1, 2, 3. Ps. xcix. 1. Rev. iv. 8.

at the baptism of St. Augustin: though afterwards the people, as St. Ambrose himself saith, daily repeated it with great devotion and delight. It contains three particulars. First, an act of praise offered to God by us, and by all creatures as well in earth as in heaven; particularly the angels, and the saints which are there, join with us. Secondly, a confession of faith; declaring the general consent unto it, and the particulars of it; namely, concerning every Person in the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and more largely concerning the Son, as to his divinity, his humanity, and particularly his incarnation; his death; his present glory; and his return to judgment. Thirdly, a supplication grounded upon it; 1. for all his people, that they may be preserved here, and saved hereafter; 2. for ourselves, who daily praise him, that we may be kept from future sin, and be pardoned for what is past, because we trust in him. *Dean Comber.*

It appears certain, that this hymn was used generally by the Church in her publick devotions before the middle of the sixth century, at which time St. Bennet instituted his order, and prescribed the singing of this hymn as one of his rules. *Dr. Nicholls.* The author however was probably not St. Ambrose, but Nicetius, a Bishop, who lived at that time. But be he the author, or be he not, the frame is so excellently modelled, that the Church could not injoin a better of human structure: and indeed it is the structure only that is human, the materials being divine, and of sacred derivation. *L'Estrange.*

The Hymn, called Te Deum, derives that name from the first words of it in the Latin: in which language it was composed about the middle of the fourth century; and hath been used by the whole Western church at least 1200 years; in that of Rome, only on sundays and holydays, and not all those, but in ours, every day, as the singular excellence of it well deserves. It begins with equal majesty and simplicity: "We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." And not we alone, but "all the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting:" every corner of it having retained some apprehensions of a supreme Ruler; on which is founded that of St. Paul to the Athenians, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you," Acts xvii. 23. But unspeakably worthier honours, than those of poor mortals, are incessantly paid him in heaven by the holy angels: mentioned in Scripture, and thence here, under the names of "Cherubin, and Seraphin;" the former denoting probably their unwearied diligence to serve him, the latter their ardent love to him; whose acclamations therefore we humbly presume to adopt, as we find them recorded in that lofty description of the prophet. "I saw the Lord, sitting upon the throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: and one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Is. vi. 1, 2, 3. Where it must be observed that for "God of hosts" in the prophet, is "God of sabaoth" in the hymn: the latter being the Hebrew word for the former: which both the Greek and Latin of the Old and New Testament having preserved, as comprehending more than could be well expressed by a single term of any other language; it is preserved in the English also, both here and in two places of the Epistles, Rom. ix. 29, James v. 4. And it signifies God to be the sovereign Lord of the "innumerable company of angels," Heb. xii. 22; of the host of heaven, which the heathen worshipped, the sun, moon, and stars; of the hosts and armies of all nations on earth; particularly the Jewish people, whom he led forth to battle; and lastly of the Christian church; which the Old Testament foretold would be "terrible as an army with banners," Cant. vi. 4, 10; and the New describes, as furnished with "weapons of warfare, mighty, through God, to the casting down of imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Him, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. This therefore the phrase, "Lord God of sabaoth," means; not, as many suppose, though it be a truth, but a very inferior one, that God is peculiarly "Lord of the sabbath" day, Mark ii. 28; Luke vi. 5. For the words are entirely different in the original, though somewhat like in our manner of writing them.

Nor are the praises of God sung in heaven by the angels alone, but "the spirits" also "of just men made perfect," Heb. xii. 23; particularly, as we go on to specify, the "apostles, prophets, and martyrs:" with whom the "holy church" yet militant "throughout the world" aspires to join, in celebrating "the Father of an infinite Majesty: his honourable, true, and only Son," compared with whom, the highest of all created beings is unworthy of that name; "also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter" of every pious soul. Then returning to "the Captain of our salvation," Heb. ii. 10, we thankfully own, that "when he took upon him to deliver man" from sin and punishment, "he did not abhor," and disdain, as beneath him, the condescension of exchanging the glories of the Godhead "for the Virgin's womb;" and "when he had overcome the sharpness of death," for us, by suffering it himself, which alludes to the words, "O death, where is thy sting," 1 Cor. xv. 55, "he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Not that we mean to say, it was not open at all till then; any more than that "life and immortality were" not at all "brought to light" before "the Gospel," 2 Tim. i. 10. But as the light, which men had antecedently to our Saviour's coming, was augmented inexpressibly by it: so the kingdom of heaven was set open vastly wider, in consequence of his sufferings, to receive believers, not from one people only, and their neighbours, but from the whole globe. To him therefore, our Mediator now, "at the right-hand of God," and who, "shall come to be our Judge," we address our prayers, that as "we magnify him day by day," and let us take care to make good that assertion, so he would keep us this and every "day without sin;" restrain us from offending through infirmity, as far as will be really for our inward benefit, but especially from wilful and presumptuous transgressions; and that his "mercy" may "lighten" that is light or come "upon us as our trust is in him." *Abp. Secker.*

It is observable, that the Church hath not added the

Holy, Holy, Holy[u] : Lord God of Sabaoth ; (Jam. v. 4.)

Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty : of thy Glory. (Ps. xix. 1. cxix. 64. civ. 24.)

The glorious company of the Apostles : praise thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets : praise thee.

The noble army of Martyrs : praise thee. (Rev. vii. 9, 10, 13, 14.)

The holy Church throughout all the world : doth acknowledge thee[x]; (Matthew xxviii. 19.)

The Father : of an infinite Majesty; (Ps. civ. 1.)

Thine honourable, true : and only Son[y]; (John v. 23. viii. 14. 1 John iv. 9.)

Also the Holy Ghost : the Comforter. (John xiv. 16.)

Thou art the King of Glory : O Christ[z] : (Ps. xxiv. 7, 10. 1 Cor. ii. 8. James ii. 1.)

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doxology, "Glory be to the Father, &c," after this, as after all the other hymns. For the "Te Deum" itself is chiefly a paraphrase on the doxology, the same hymn to the blessed Trinity, only drawn into a larger form. *Dr. Bisse.*

Neither should "Amen" be said at the end of it, as is the practice in several places. *Collis.*

Though we generally stand when we say this hymn, yet it is manifestly, from the whole form, addressed to God. And indeed it is one of the most excellent pieces of devotion ever written; so that the Church has with the greatest reason made it a part of her liturgy. It is therefore much to be lamented, that many persons are exceedingly careless in the use of it; repeating it with as little consideration and zeal, as if they did not regard what they said, or to whom the words are directed. As an assistance to their congregations it is useful for the clergy to pause, after they have said, "Here endeth the first lesson;" that the people may have time to rise from their seats, and be prepared for the beginning of this solemn hymn. Indeed the same observation applies to the beginning of any other hymn or psalm, after either lesson, in either morning or evening prayer. *Dr. Bennet.*

[t] *—the heavens,*] Though the heavens are not rational creatures, nor have any proper voice, yet they are figuratively said to "cry to God," and utter his praises, because by the contemplation of their wonderful beauty the glory of their Creator is seen. In this sense the psalmist says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, &c." Ps. xix. 1—4. *Dr. Bennet.*

[u] *Holy, Holy, Holy,*] We here "praise and acknowledge" the Thrice holy, as revealed to us in Scripture by the three personal distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Lord God of sabaoth, that is, of hosts or armies; who gave life and being to all the inhabitants of earth and heaven, and on whom they continually depend for their preservation and support. The commencement of this hymn is a paraphrase on that sublime song of the heavenly host, recorded by the prophet Isaiah, vi. 3, and by St. John in the Revelation, iv. 8. The same is likewise adopted by our Church into her office for the communion. *Waldo.*

This is the song which we must sing in the regions of everlasting bliss. Let us learn to sing it now. Whilst we are on earth, let us endeavour to join with the heavenly hosts in singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts." Let us not be discouraged by the wide difference that subsists between their nature and ours. It is true, they are spiritual: and it is equally true, that God is waiting to make us so too. *Rogers.*

[x] *The holy Church—doth acknowledge thee,* &c.] The form of words to be used at the baptizing of all Christians is prescribed by our blessed Saviour himself, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19. This form is used throughout God's holy church, and consequently the three Persons in the ever-blessed and adorable Trinity are acknowledged. Such as deny either of them oppose our blessed Saviour's own doctrine, and thereby set themselves against Christ. And as it is said 1 John ii. 22, "That he is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son," so it follows from the text abovementioned, that whosoever denieth the Holy Ghost is antichrist also. *Veneer.*

[y] *Thine honourable, true, and only Son;*] Christ is called God's "true Son," because he is not barely an adopted child, as we are by baptism; but very God of very God, by eternal generation. For this reason also, and in this sense, he is God's "only Son:" and being such, he cannot but be "honourable," or worthy of all possible respect and adoration. *Dr. Bennet.*

The title of honourable evidently belongs to the Son; because "he, that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," John v. 23. *Veneer.*

[z] *Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ:*] This title is given to him by the inspired Psalmist in the 24th Psalm, which is a plain prophecy of his ascension into heaven. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates—and the King of Glory shall go in." And then follows, "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory." Ps. xxiv. 7, 10. It is remarkable that this title of THE LORD OF HOSTS, which is never bestowed on any but the one supreme God, is here expressly applied to Christ, as it is in several other places; even to him, "who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen," Rom. ix. 5; and whom St. Paul elsewhere calls "The Lord of Glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. Indeed the proofs of his divinity in every part of the Bible are innumerable: both the Old and the New Testament proclaiming him to be, what this hymn styles him, "The EVERLASTING Son of the Father." *Waldo.*

The propriety of singing or reading the Te Deum after the first lesson must be evident to every observer. The Scriptures of the Old Testament set before us God's exceeding great and precious promises, the rectitude of his moral government, and his wonderful dealings with his church and people from the earliest times. If we hear these things in a proper temper of mind, they will fill us with devout sentiments of adoration and praise. And to express these sentiments in the most lively and vi-

Thou art the everlasting Son : of the Father. Rev. xxii. 13.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man : thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. Is. vii. 14. Matt. i. 23.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death : thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. John xiv. 2. 1 Thess. iv. 14, 17. John iii. 36.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God : in the Glory of the Father. Col. iii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 21.

We believe that thou shalt come : to be our Judge. Rom. xiv. 10. Acts xvii. 31. Job ix. 15.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants : whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Mark ix. 24. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints : in glory everlasting. 2 Thess. i. 10. Eph. i. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 10. 2 Cor. i. 2. Acts xv. 11.

O Lord, save thy people : and bless thine heritage.

Govern them : and lift them up for ever. Ps. xxviii. 9.

Day by day : we magnify thee ; Ps. xl. 16.

And we worship thy Name : ever world without end. 2 Sam. vii. 26. Ps. cxlv. 1, 2.

Vouchsafe, O Lord : to keep us this day without sin. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. xix. 13. cxli. 3.

O Lord, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us. Ps. cxxiii. 3.

O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us : as our trust is in thee. Ps. xxxiii. 18.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted : let me never be confounded. Ps. xxii. 4, 5.

¶ *Or this Canticle*[a],

Benedicite[b], *omnia Opera.*

O All ye Works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Angels of the Lord, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Heavens, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

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gorous manner, more suitable words have never been devised than those of this rational and majestick hymn. *Rogers.*

[a] *Or this Canticle,*] Or Song of praise. *Abp. Secker.* The song of the Three Children is sometimes used, instead of the "Te Deum," after the first lesson: which, though it be not canonical Scripture, is an exact paraphrase of the 148th psalm, being an elegant summons to all God's works to praise him, intimating that they all set forth his glory, and inviting us, who have the benefit of them, to praise and magnify his name with them. It begins with the whole creation, even "all the works of the Lord," and then particularizes the several parts of it with their inhabitants. *Dean Comber.*

This was an ancient hymn in the Jewish church, and adopted into the Christian worship in publick devotion from very early times: being used, as St. Augustin affirms, in his time on the solemn festivals of the Church. Indeed our Church doth not accept it for Canonical Scripture, because it is not found in the Hebrew, nor was allowed in the Jewish canon. But, by whomsoever and upon whatsoever occasion it was composed or uttered, it is not only very ancient, but is a pious form of praise, and fit to excite a spirit of devotion in the reader. *Dr. Nicholls, Dean Comber.*

It is now very seldom used, at least in parochial churches: it contains however a noble acknowledgment of the glory of God in his works of creation, the memorial of which was the original design of the sabbath-day: and might be justly preferred to the former hymn, whenever there is particular occasion to return thanks for the blessings of nature: *Abp. Secker.* Or when the lesson is out of Daniel: *Bp. Sparrow.* When we would glorify God for his works; or when the lesson treats of the creation, or any wonderful act of God's providence. *Dean Comber.*

When in the course of this hymn, we call upon "the angels and spirits of the righteous," upon the "heavens" and the other works of creation to "bless the Lord," this is plainly no more than a figure of speech, though a very sublime one: lending as it were a tongue even to inanimate creatures; and calling both on those who do not, and those which cannot, hear us, to glorify our common Maker, just as is done in the 148th Psalm, of which this Canticle is an evident imitation. *Abp. Secker.*

[b] *Benedicite.*] This Canticle is so called, because in the Latin version it begins with these words. It is called "The Song of the Three Children," because Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, (whom the prince of the Eunuchs named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Dan. i. 7,) are reported to have sung it in the burning fiery furnace, into which they were cast by order of Nebuchadnezzar for adhering stedfastly to their God, Dan. iii. 19, &c; and in which God preserved them in a miraculous manner, ver. 27. *Dr. Bennet.*

This and the Te Deum are the only hymns used in our service, that are of man's composing. Our church being careful, even beyond all the ancient churches, in singing to God, to sing in the words of God. *Dr. Bisse.*

O ye Waters that be above the Firmament, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Powers of the Lord, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Sun, and Moon, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Stars of Heaven, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Showers, and Dew, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Winds of God, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Fire and Heat, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Winter and Summer, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Dews, and Frosts, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Frost and Cold, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Ice and Snow, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Nights, and Days, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Light and Darkness, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Lightnings, and Clouds, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O let the Earth bless the Lord : yea, let it praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Mountains, and Hills, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Green Things upon the Earth, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Seas, and Floods, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Whales, and all that move in the Waters, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Beasts, and Cattle, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Children of Men, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O let Israel bless the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Priests of the Lord, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Spirits and Souls of the Righteous, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye holy and humble Men of heart, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, bless ye the Lord : praise him, and magnify him for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then shall be read in like manner*[c] *the Second Lesson, taken out of the New Testament*[d]. *And after that, the Hymn following*[e]; *except when that shall happen to be read in the Chapter for the Day, or for the Gospel on* St. John Baptist's *Day.*

Benedictus. St. Luke i. 68.

BLESSED be the Lord God of Israel : for he hath visited, and redeemed his people ;

And hath raised up a mighty sal-

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[c] *Then shall be read in like manner*] Namely, "distinctly, with an audible voice, &c," as in the rubrick before the first lesson. *Dr. Bennet.*

[d] *—the Second Lesson taken out of the New Testament.*] The cause of reading first the Old Testament, then the New, and always somewhat out of both, is most likely to have been that which Justin Martyr and St. Augustin observe in comparing the two Testaments. "The apostles," saith the one, "have taught us, as themselves did learn, first the precepts of the Law, and then the Gospels. For what else is the Law, but the Gospel foreshewed? What other the Gospel, than the Law fulfilled?" In like sort the other, "What the Old Testament hath, the very same the New containeth; but that which lieth there as under a shadow, is here brought forth into the open sun. Things there prefigured are here performed." Again, "In the Old Testament there is a close comprehension of the New: in the New, an open discovery of the Old." To be short, this method of publick reading either purposely did tend, or at the least wise doth fitly serve, that from smaller things the minds of the hearers may go forward to the knowledge of greater, and by degrees climb up from the lowest to the highest things. *Hooker.*

As by this harmony of the lessons the faith of the hearers is established; so by the order, wherein they are read, the understanding is enlightened. Whilst therefore the lessons, whether out of the Old or New Testament, are read in our ears, we should not let them pass away as a vulgar history, or an idle legend, or as the word of man; but reverently listen to it, as it is in truth the word of God. For the minister in reading the Scriptures is, even as Aaron was, the mouth of God to the people: for which cause he is directed to turn his face to them as speaking to them from God, and to read standing, to signify his authority. When therefore he standeth up in order to read the lesson, let every devout hearer take that advice, which Eli gave to Samuel, waiting likewise in the sanctuary, saying within himself; "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." 1 Sam. iii. 9. And let us not only hearken, but apply what we hear; if examples, let these lead us; if precepts, let these teach us; if commands, let these bind us; if promises, let these encourage us; if threats, let these warn us; if mercies, let these comfort us; if judgments, let these awaken us. In whatsoever way the Lesson brings us instruction in righteousness, which it always does in some way, let us at the close answer with the congregation of Israel, saying in our hearts, "all that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." Exod. xix. 8. *Dr. Bisse.*

[e] *And after that, the Hymn following;*] When the Gospel was first published to the world, the angels sang praise; and all holy men, to whom it was revealed, entertained these "good tidings" with great joy. And since it is our duty also, whenever we hear the Gospel read, to give glory to God, therefore the Church appoints this hymn, which was composed by holy Zacharias upon the first notice that God had sent a Saviour to mankind, and is one of the first Evangelical hymns indited by God's Spirit upon this occasion. Its original therefore is divine, its matter unexceptionable, and its fitness for this place unquestionable. *Dean Comber.*

This prophecy of Zacharias, called "Benedictus" for the reason already mentioned, was uttered on the birth of John the Baptist; and is a thanksgiving for the redemption of mankind, of which he was to publish the speedy approach. It copies very nearly the stile of the Jewish prophets, who described spiritual blessings by temporal imagery. Thus, meaning to praise the "Father of mercies," 2 Cor. i. 3, for delivering all nations from the dominion of the wicked one, it "blesses the Lord God of Israel, for saving his people from their enemies, and from the hand of those that hate them." Now this kind of language was laid aside after our Saviour's ascension: and therefore the prophecy before us is not of later date, but genuine. Yet it sufficiently explains, to what sort of "salvation" it refers: by mentioning "the remission of sins, the giving of light to them that sat in darkness, and the guiding of their feet into the way of peace." And so it may teach us both the fitness and the method, of assigning to the Old Testament predictions an evangelical interpretation. The people, in repeating it, should remember, that the words, "And thou, Child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest," belong, not to our Saviour, but to the Baptist. And it is easily to be apprehended, that if, in the dawning which preceded "the Sun of Righteousness," Mal. iv. 2, good Zacharias offered up his thanks with such transport, we, to whom he shines out in full splendour, ought to recite it with double gratitude. *Abp. Secker.*

Though the hundredth psalm is almost constantly used after the second lesson, there seems no good reason why this hymn should be laid aside. They are both equally indited by the Holy Spirit, and both admirably calculated to assist the devotion, and elevate the affections, of a Christian congregation: and the hymn, being placed first, seems to have been intended for more general use than the psalm. *Waldo.*

The Church hath appointed two songs of praise and thanksgiving to be used, either of them after each lesson: but not so indifferently, but that the former practice of exemplary churches and reason may guide us in the

vation for us : in the house of his servant David ;

As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets : which have been since the world began ;

That we should be saved from our enemies : and from the hands of all that hate us ;

To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers : and to remember his holy Covenant ;

To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham : that he would give us ;

That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies : might serve him without fear ;

In holiness and righteousness before him : all the days of our life.

And thou, Child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways ;

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people : for the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God : whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us ;

To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death : and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Or this Psalm,*

Jubilate Deo[f]. Psalm c.

O Be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God : it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves ; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise : be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting : and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

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choice. For the "Te Deum," "Benedictus," "Magnificat," and "Nunc Dimittis," being the most expressive jubilations and rejoicings for the redemption of the world, may be said more often than the rest, especially on Sundays and other festivals of our Lord. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[f] *Or this Psalm, Jubilate Deo.*] So called from its commencement in Latin. When the Benedictus is not used, there is appointed another divine hymn taken out of the Old Testament, but wholly respecting the evangelical state there revealed to holy David. The title it bears in the Bible is "a psalm of praise;" and it was first composed for a form of publick thanksgiving to be sung by course at the oblation of the peace-offering, and so may well be used by us after we have heard the Gospel of peace; after which it seems to have been sung about the year 450. *Dean Comber.* It was introduced into this part of our service for variety in King Edward's second book. *Wheatly.*

The hundredth psalm, which, being shorter than the Benedictus, we use the more frequently on account probably of the service being long, is peculiarly proper after a lesson from the Gospel, since it peculiarly relates to the Gospel times : as appears from its inviting "all lands to be joyful in the Lord;" declaring them equally "God's people, and the sheep of his pasture;" and calling on them equally to "go into his gates, and praise him for his mercy and truth." And may we all accordingly so praise and serve him "in his courts" here below, that we may for ever "dwell in his tabernacle and rest on his holy hill" above, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Ps. xv. 1. *Abp. Secker.*

¶ *Then shall be sung or said the Apostles' Creed*[g] *by the Minister and the people*[h], *standing*[i]: *except only such days*[k] *as the Creed of* Saint Athanasius *is appointed to be read.*

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[g] *Then shall be sung or said the Apostles' Creed*] Which is placed between the third part of the daily service of our Church, namely, the lessons, and the fourth part, namely, the petitions, that we may express that faith in what we have heard, which is the ground of what we are about to ask. For as "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 17, so we must "ask in faith," if we "think to receive any thing of the Lord," James i. 6, 7. For "how shall we call upon him, in whom we have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. But as all the doctrines of Scripture, though equally true, are not of equal importance; the more necessary articles have been, from the beginning of Christianity, collected into one body, called in Scripture "the form of sound words," 2 Tim. i. 13; "the words of faith," 1 Tim. iv. 6; "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," Heb. vi. 1; but, in our common way of speaking at present, "the Creed," from the Latin word, Credo, which signifies "I believe." Now the ancient Churches had many such Creeds: some longer, some shorter; differing on several heads in phrase, but agreeing in method and sense: of which that called "the Apostles' Creed" is one. And it deserves this name, not so much from any certainty, or great likelihood, that the apostles drew it up in these very expressions: though some, pretty early, and many since, have imagined they did: as because it contains the chief apostolick doctrines; and was used by a Church, which, before it grew corrupt, was justly respected as the chief apostolick settlement, I mean, the Roman. *Abp. Secker.*

The opinion, which ascribes the framing of this Creed to the apostles in person, though as ancient as the first account we have of the Creed itself from Ruffinus in the year 390, is yet rendered highly improbable, as by many collateral reasons, so especially by this argument, that it is not appealed to in elder times as the sacred and unalterable standard. And therefore our excellent Church with due caution styles it in her 8th Article, "that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed." But though it seems not to have been compiled or formally drawn up by the apostles themselves, yet is its authority of sufficient strength; since it may still be demonstrated to be the apostles, or rather the apostolick, Creed, in three several respects. First, as it is drawn from the fountains of apostolical Scripture. Secondly, as it agrees in substance with the confessions of all orthodox churches, which make up the apostolick church in the extended meaning of the word. Thirdly, as it was the Creed of an apostolick church in the restrained sense of that term, denoting a church founded by the apostles, as was that of Rome. *Kennet.*

Though this Creed be not of the apostles' immediate framing, yet it may be truly styled apostolical, not only because it contains the sum of the apostles' doctrine, but also, because the age thereof is so great, that its birth must be fetched from the very apostolick times. It is true, the exact form of the present Creed cannot pretend to be so ancient by four hundred years; but a form, not much different from it, was used long before. Irenæus, the scholar of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, where he repeats a creed not much unlike to ours, assures us, that "the church, dispersed throughout the whole world, had received this faith from the apostles and their disciples;" which is also affirmed by Tertullian of one of his creeds, that "that rule of faith had been current in the Church from the beginning of the Gospel:" and, which is observable, although there was so great a diversity of creeds, as that scarce two churches did exactly agree therein, yet the form and substance of every Creed was in a great measure the same; so that, except there had been, from the very plantation of Christianity, a form of sound words, or a system of faith, delivered by the first planters thereof, it is not easy to conceive, how all churches should harmonize, not only in the articles themselves into which they were baptized, but, in a great measure also, in the method and order of them. *Lord Chancellor King.*

The Creed itself was neither the work of one man, nor of one day; but the composure of it was gradual. First, several of the articles therein were derived from the very days of the apostles: these were the articles of the existence of God, the Trinity; that Jesus was Christ, or the Saviour of the world; the remission of sins; and the resurrection of the dead. Secondly, the others were afterwards added by the primitive doctors and bishops, in opposition to gross heresies and errors that sprung up in the Church. *Lord Chancellor King.* It hath been received in all ages with the greatest veneration and esteem. The ancients declare their respect and reverence for it with the most noble and majestick expressions: and in these latter times, throughout several centuries of years, so great a deference hath been rendered thereunto, that it hath not only been used in baptism, but in every publick assembly it hath been usually, if not always read, as the standard and basis of the Christian faith. *Lord King.*

But neither this, nor any other Creed, hath authority of its own, equal to Scripture; but derives its principal authority from being founded on Scripture. Nor is it in the power of any man or number of men, either to lessen or increase the fundamental articles of the Christian faith: which yet the Church of Rome, not content with this its primitive Creed, hath profanely attempted: adding twelve articles more, founded on its own, that is, on no authority, to the ancient twelve, which stand on the authority of God's word. But our Church hath wisely refused to go a step beyond the original form; since all necessary truths are briefly comprehended in it, which it is the duty of every one of us firmly to believe, and openly to profess. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x. 10. *Abp. Secker.*

The place of the Creed in our Liturgy is, first, immediately after the lessons of holy Scripture out of which it is taken; and since faith comes by hearing God's word, and the Gospel doth not profit without faith, therefore it is very fit, upon hearing thereof, we should exercise and profess our faith. Secondly, The Creed is placed just before the Prayers, as being the foundation of our petitions; we cannot call on him, on whom we have not believed, Rom. x. 14; and since we are to pray to God the Father in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the Spirit, for remission of sins, and a joyful resurrection,

Heb. xi. 6. I Believe in God[l] the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and
1 Cor. viii. 6. Gen. xvii. 1. earth:

And in Jesus Christ[m] his only Son
our Lord, Who was conceived by 2 Cor. i. 3. John i. 18.
the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin

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we ought first to declare, that we believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that there is remission here and resurrection hereafter to be had for all true members of the catholick Church, and then we may be said to pray in faith. And hence St. Ambrose and St. Augustin advise Christians to say it daily in their private devotions; and so our old Saxon councils command all to learn and use it, not as a prayer (as some ignorantly or maliciously object) but as a ground for our prayers, and a reason for our faith and hope of their acceptance: upon which account also, as soon as persecution ceased, and there was no danger of the heathens overhearing it, the Creed was used in the publick service.

And there are many benefits which we may receive by this daily use of it. For, first, This fixes it firmly in our memories, that we may never forget this blessed rule of our prayers, nor be at any time without this necessary touchstone to try all doctrines by. Secondly, Thus we daily renew our profession of fidelity to Almighty God, and repeat that watchword which was given us when we were first listed under Christ's banner, declaring thereby that we retain our allegiance to him and remain his faithful servants and soldiers; and no doubt that will move him the sooner to hear the prayers, which we are now making to him for his aid. Thirdly, By this we declare our unity amongst ourselves, and shew ourselves to be members of that holy catholick Church, by and for which these common prayers are made: those who hold this one faith, and those only, have a right to pray thus; nor can any other expect to be admitted to join in them; and therefore this Creed is the symbol and badge to manifest who are fit to make these prayers, and receive the benefit of them.

Wherefore in our daily use of this sacred form, let us observe these rules. First, To be heartily thankful to God for revealing these divine, mysterious, and saving truths to us; and, though the "Glory be to the Father," &c, be only set at the end of St. Athanasius's Creed, yet the duty of thanksgiving must be performed upon every repetition of this Creed also. Secondly, We must give our positive and particular assent to every article as we go along, and receive it as an infallible oracle from the mouth of God, and for this reason we must repeat it with an audible voice after the minister, and in our mind annex that word "I believe" to every particular article; for, though it be but once expressed in the beginning, yet it must be supplied, and is understood in every article: and, to shew our consent the more evidently, we must stand up when we repeat it, and resolve to stand up stoutly in defence thereof, so as if need were, to defend it, or seal the truth of it with our blood. Thirdly, We must devoutly apply every article, as we go along, to be both a ground for our prayers, and a guide to our lives: for, if we rightly believe the power of the Father, the love of the Son, and the grace of the Holy Ghost, it will encourage us (who are members of the catholick Church) to pray heartily for all spiritual and temporal blessings, and give us very lively hopes of obtaining all our requests. Again, since these holy principles were not revealed and selected out from all other truths, for any other end but to make us live more holily; therefore we must consider, how it is fit that man should live, who believes that God the Father is his Creator, God the Son his Redeemer, and God the Holy Ghost his Sanctifier; who believes that he is a member of that catholick Church, wherein there is a communion of saints, and remission for sins, and shall be a resurrection of the body, and a life everlasting afterwards. No man is so ignorant, but he can tell what manner of persons they ought to be who believe this, and it is evident that whoever firmly and fully believes all this, his faith will certainly and necessarily produce a holy life. *Dean Comber.*

[h] —*by the Minister and the people,*] That is, by the whole congregation: because it is the profession of every person present, and ought therefore to be personally pronounced by every one of them, the more expressly to declare their belief of the same to each other, and consequently to the whole Christian world, with whom they maintain communion. Accordingly the form runs in the singular number: the minister not saying in the name of the congregation, "We believe in God &c," but each person saying in his own name, "I believe in God &c." That the congregation may repeat their Creed as they ought, they should frequently reflect on the great importance of it. And it is much to be desired that the clergy should not begin it or proceed with it hastily; but so as to allow the congregation leisure to begin together with them, and to go through the whole form with due deliberation. *Dr. Bennet.*

This open "confession with the mouth," to be made by all the people, is chiefly with regard to men; before whom hereby as we give glory to God, so we call upon others to be witnesses, approvers, and followers of our faith. For with regard to God, who seeth the heart, it is sufficient to a man's righteousness or justification in his sight, if he "believeth with the heart." And in this respect also the practice of the Church of Rome seems deficient; which appoints the Creed, as well as the Lord's Prayer, to be said secretly; that is, either mentally, with the heart, not with the mouth, which is no confession at all; or silently by every one to himself, not audibly in the hearing of the congregation; which defeats the intended acts of confession, namely, the satisfying of the congregation that we hold the same faith, and the confirming and encouraging of them in the same. *Dr. Bisse.*

[i] —*standing*] It should not be by any means with negligence or indifference that we profess our faith: for what we believe is the only just foundation of what we do, or hope, or fear. On this account we "stand" at the repeating of the Creed; to express our stedfastness in it, and our readiness to "contend earnestly" in every proper method "for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude ver. 3. *Abp. Secker.* In Poland and Lithuania the nobles used formerly to draw their swords, in token that, if need were, they would defend and seal the truth of it with their blood. *Wheatly.*

Turning at the same time towards the east, as many do, is an ancient custom; as indeed, in most re-

Matt. i. 20. Luke i. 27, 31, 35. Matt. xxvii. 2, 26. Matt. xxvii. 35, 50, 59, 60. Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried,

He descended into hell[n]; The third day he rose again from the dead, Acts ii. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 4.

ligions men have directed their worship some particular way. And this practice being intended only to honour Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness," who hath risen upon us, to enlighten us with that doctrine of salvation, to which we then declare our adherence; it ought not to be condemned, as superstition: and yet, being neither obligatory in itself nor commanded by authority, the omission of it ought not to be censured, as irreverence or disobedience. *Abp. Secker.*

Most churches are so contrived that the greater part of the congregation faces the east. The Jews in their dispersion throughout the world, when they prayed, turned their faces towards the mercy seat and cherubim, where the ark stood. See 2 Chron. vi. 36—38. Daniel was found praying toward Jerusalem, Dan. vi. 10, because of the situation of the temple. And this has always been esteemed a very becoming way of expressing our belief in God, namely, by turning to the east, that quarter of the heavens, where he is supposed to have his peculiar residence of glory. *Collis.* The Christians from the beginning built their churches, and worshipped towards the east, because they expected our Saviour, who is called the Day-Spring from on high, to come from thence. In that part also the holy table or altar is placed, where God affords his most gracious and mysterious presence. *Clutterbuck.* See note from Dr. Bisse before the Nicene Creed.

[k] *—except only such days* &c.] These days are enumerated in the rubrick before the Athanasian Creed. Our Church has with good reason ordered the omission of this Creed, when the other is appointed: because that Creed contains much the same articles as this, but some of them expressed in a fuller manner. *Dr. Bennet.*

[l] *I believe in God* &c.] Paraphrase on the Apostles' Creed.

I make this confession of my faith, relating to those truths, which upon the testimony of God himself are revealed unto me. I. I believe, that there is one only God, Deut. iv. 35; 1 Cor. viii. 6; that He is Father to all men by creation, Mal. ii. 10; by redemption, Deut. xxxii. 6; adoption, 1 John iii. 1; but in a peculiar manner the Father of our blessed Lord by eternal generation, Heb. i. 1, 2; John vi. 57. I believe farther, that this one God is "Almighty," and is vested with an infinite power of doing all things, Is. xlv. 12; Rev. xix. 6; and governing all things at his pleasure, 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Jer. xvi. 21; that he was "the Maker of heaven and earth," that is, the whole world and every thing contained therein, Exod. xx. 11; John i. 10; Col. i. 16.

II. I believe likewise "in Jesus Christ," being verily persuaded, that he is what his name "Jesus" signifies, the Saviour of the world, Luke i. 31; Matt. i. 21; Acts xiii. 23. That he is "Christ" or the Messiah, which was so long before his coming promised under the Old Testament, Gen. xxi. 12, and xlix. 10; Mal. iii. 1. That he is the "only Son" of God, begotten from all eternity, partly, as being said to come down from heaven, John vi. 38; partly, because he is recorded in Scripture to have made the worlds, Heb. i. 2; Col. i. 16: partly, by reason he is frequently called God, John i. 1; Phil. ii. 6, 7; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 5: but chiefly, because of the divine essence being communicated to him, John xvi. 15, and v. 26; 2 Cor. iv. 4; and that, in a manner different from all created beings, Heb. i. 13. Who is likewise "our Lord" by being the true Jehovah or Lord, Hos. i. 7; Matt. iii. 3; by having all things put under his dominion, Ps. cx. 5; by redeeming us from the power of the devil, who before had got the mastery over us, Heb. ii. 14; Col. ii. 15; by purchasing us by his blood, Acts xx. 28; Eph. i. 7; by our voluntarily becoming his servants and scholars by baptism, Rom. vi. 6, 13. I believe further, that though Christ was true man, Heb. iv. 15, yet he was not produced after the ordinary manner of human conception, but by the overshadowing "of the Holy Ghost," Luke i. 35; was "born of Mary," a poor maid of the lineage of David, who continued a "virgin" notwithstanding that miraculous birth, Luke i. 27; that he suffered an ignominious death as was foretold, Is. liii. 9; Mark ix. 12: and this at the time when "Pontius Pilate" was governor under the Romans in Judea, Matt. xxvii. 2: was nailed to a cross, a terrible and scandalous punishment, by which the Romans used to put their wicked slaves to death: that under this grievous torture he became really "dead," Luke xxiii. 46; Mark xv. 37: and after that by a kind disciple was "buried," John xix. 38: and "descended into hell," or hades, the repository or place of separate souls, Is. v. 14; Ps. xvi. 10: on "the third day" after his crucifixion he "rose again," Matt. xvi. 21; Mark ix. 31: as he had before foretold, Matt. xxvii. 63: after that, in the sight of a great many credible witnesses, he in a most glorious manner "ascended up into heaven," Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Acts i. 9, 10: as the prophets had long before predicted, Ps. lxviii. 18; Micah ii. 13: and was shortly after advanced to a most especial honour, which was never vouchsafed to any person before, Heb. i. 13; to "sit on the right hand of God," Luke xxii. 69; 1 Pet. iii. 22: which is a place of the greatest dignity in heaven, 1 Kings ii. 19; Heb. viii. 1: where he has begun his spiritual kingdom, and treads upon the necks of the great enemies of his jurisdiction; sin, Rom. vi. 14; satan, Heb. ii. 14; and death, 1 Cor. xv. 26: who, at the end of the world, shall come in a triumphant and glorious procession attended with the angels, 2 Thess. i. 7; Matt. xxv. 31; and shall have all power committed to him, John v. 22, 27; Acts xvii. 31, to judge those who shall then be alive, 1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 51; and those who shall be raised up from their graves, Matt. xxv. 32.

III. I believe "the Holy Ghost" to be very God, and the third Person of the blessed Trinity; that he is not a virtue or grace, as some fondly imagine, but a person, Eph. iv. 30; Rom. viii. 26; Acts x. 19: who is called frequently "the Comforter," John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7: and is expressly named God, Acts v. 3, 4. I further believe, that there is a number of men, sequestered from the rest of the world by faith in Christ, and governed by his laws; who have continued throughout all ages from the apostles' time, and shall do so to the coming of Christ, which I call "the Catholick Church," which is "holy," 2 Tim. ii. 19, by reason of

He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Mark xvi. 19.

Matt. xxv. 31, 32. Acts x. 42.

I believe in the Holy Ghost[o]; The

Matt. xxviii. 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 1 John v. 7.

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the holy profession, which they are called to; though all the particular members are not so, Matt. xiii. 24, 47. It is likewise "Catholick" or universal, because of its diffusiveness throughout the world, Matt. xxviii. 19; Luke xxiv. 47. I believe that there is a "communion of the saints" and elect people of God, 1 Cor. vi. 11; Eph. i. 13; with God the Father, 1 John i. 3; with God the Son, John xvii. 21; 1 Cor. i. 9; with the Holy Ghost, Phil. ii. 1; Rom. viii. 9; and with all the saints in all the churches now upon earth, 1 John i. 7; as also with all the saints departed, Heb. xii. 22, 23. I believe further, that, whereas by our sins we are become debtors to God's justice, 1 John iii. 4; Matt. v. 22; so through the blood of Christ, who has made satisfaction for them, Matt. xx. 28; 2 Cor. v. 18; Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 20; we may obtain "forgiveness" of them, not only in baptism, Acts ii. 38; Acts xxii. 16; Eph. v. 26; but afterwards, if we truly repent of them, 1 John iv. 10; 1 John ii. 1. I believe likewise "the resurrection of the body," not only as a thing possible to be done by an almighty agent, Luke i. 37; Acts xxvi. 8; Matt. x. 28: but as a thing generally expected by the Jews, Job xix. 25; Dan. xii. 2: that this is clearly promised under the Gospel, Rom. xiv. 9; viii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 21: and moreover that the self-same body shall rise again, 1 Cor. xv. 23; Rom. viii. 11; 2 Cor. v. 10: and lastly, that the resurrection shall extend to bad as well as good men, 1 Cor. xv. 22; John v. 28. Finally I believe the "everlasting" duration of all bad men in misery, Matt. xxv. 41, 46; x. 28; Luke iii. 17; Rev. xx. 10; and of all good men in a state of glory, which does arise from a vacancy from all sorrow, Rev. xxi. 4; from the vision of God, 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 John iii. 2; as also from unspeakable pleasures, which they shall then partake of, 1 Cor. ii. 9. Amen. *Dr. Nicholls.*

[m] *And in Jesus Christ,*] It is usual for our congregations to bow, when we come to this article of the Creed: agreeably to a pious ordinance of our Reformers, first established by the Queen's Injunctions, 1559, and afterwards incorporated into the Canons of the year 1603. It is there provided, that "when in time of divine service, the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it has been accustomed, testifying, by these outward ceremonies and gestures, their inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true and eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone, all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind, for this life and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised." *Collis.*

See the note from Dr. Bisse and Hooker on the rubrick before the Nicene Creed.

[n] *He descended into hell;*] The meaning is, that his soul, being separated from his body by a real transition and local motion, went into the unseen region of spirits; where, according to the laws of death, it remained amongst other religious and pious departed souls till the resurrection of his body on the third day. In the ancient English dialect the word "Hell" was taken in a large sense for the general receptacle of all souls whatsoever, and it is so used in the old translation of the psalms in our Common Prayer Book, Ps. lxxxix. 47. Which sense may be confirmed from the primary and original signification of the word: according to which it imports no more than an invisible and hidden place, being derived from the old Saxon word *Hil*, which signifies to hide, or from the participle thereof *Helled*, that is to say, hidden or covered: as in the western parts of England at this very day to "hele" over any thing signifies amongst the common people to cover it; and he, that covereth an house with tile or slate, is called an *Helliar*. Whence it appears that the word "Hell" according to its primitive notion exactly answers to the Greek word "Hades," which signifies the common mansion of departed souls, and was so called because it is an unseen place. *Lord Chancellor King.*

The assertion in the Creed is founded on Ps. xvi. 10, where David prophesies of Christ, what St. Peter in the Acts explains of him, that "his soul should not be left in hell," Acts ii. 24—32; which imports that once he was there. The most common meaning, not only amongst heathens, but amongst Jews and the first Christians, of the word "Hades," here translated "Hell," was in general that invisible world, one part or another of which the souls of the deceased, whether good or bad, inhabit. Probably therefore all that was intended to be taught by this part of the Creed is, that when he died, as his body was laid in the grave, so his spirit went where other separate spirits are. And we should remember, in repeating these words of the Creed, that this is the whole of what we are bound to profess by them. But in what part of space, or of what nature, that receptacle is, in which the souls of men continue from their death, till they rise again, we scarce know at all: excepting that we are sure it is divided into two extremely different regions, the dwelling of the righteous, called in St. Luke "Abraham's bosom," where Lazarus was; and that of the wicked, where "the rich man" was; "between which there was a great gulph fixed," Luke xvi. 22, 23, 26. And we have no proof, that our Saviour went on any account into the latter: but since he told the penitent thief, that "he should be that day with him in Paradise," Luke xxiii. 43, we are certain that he was in the former; where "they, which die in the Lord, rest from their labours," and "are blessed;" Rev. xiv. 13; waiting for a still more perfect happiness at the resurrection of the last day. *Abp. Secker.*

[o] *I believe in the Holy Ghost;*] As faith in God is confessedly the foundation of all religion, so the belief of the true God, as revealed to us in the holy Scriptures under the personal distinction of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," is doubtless the first principle of Christianity. On this principle the Creed proceeds. The first article of our belief is in "God the Father Almighty." We next declare our faith in the second Person of the ever blessed Trinity, "his only

Eph. i. 22. 23. ii. 19. 20,21. v. 25. 26, 27. holy Catholick[p] Church; The Communion of Saints[q]; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen[r]. Acts xiii. 38. 1 Cor. xv. 20, 21, 22, 42. Phil. iii. 21. Matt. xxv. 46.

Rom. xii. 5. 1 John i. 3. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Heb. i. 14. Rom. xii. 5. 1 John i. 7. Acts ii. 42. Heb. xii. 22, 23.

Son, our Lord Jesus Christ." We then proceed to the third Person, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." Here ends the principal part of the Creed. And it were to be wished, that, in repeating it, a pause were here made to distinguish it from what follows. For hitherto we have declared our faith in the holy Trinity, into whose name we were baptized. The remaining articles relate to some of the most important doctrines of our religion, which we are required indeed firmly to believe, because they are revealed to us by the word of God: but, when we profess our belief in these, it is in a somewhat different and more restrained sense than when we say, we "believe in God the Father Almighty, in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." For to believe in the divine being implies, not only a firm and steady belief of the existence and perfections of God; but also an hearty trust and dependence on him, a reliance on his promises, a submission to his will, and an entire devotion of ourselves to his service. This is that true and lively faith, which alone will be available to our salvation; and this we should always most sincerely and cordially profess, when we declare our belief in the blessed Trinity. Thus when we say "I believe in the Holy Ghost" we should not confine our thoughts to the nature or essence of the Holy Spirit, as being one with the Father and the Son, though that is the first thing intended to be thereby acknowledged; but extend them to the offices he sustains in the work of our redemption as our sanctifier and comforter; and to our consequent obligations to adore and obey him. Then follows, "the holy Catholick Church;" to believe in which, or rather to believe which, signifies only, that we believe that there is such a general society of Christians dispersed throughout the world; not confined to any particular age, or nation, but catholick, or universal, according to the descriptions so often given of it in the sacred writings. This distinction is carefully observed in the Nicene Creed; where after the article of belief in the Holy Ghost, follows; not, I believe in, but "I believe one catholick and apostolick church, I acknowledge one baptism, &c." *Waldo.*

[p] —*Catholick*] The word "Catholick," applied to the Church in our Creed, is no where used in Scripture, but frequently in the early Christian writers: and it means "universal," extending to all mankind. The Jewish Church was not universal, but particular: for it consisted only of one nation; and their law permitted sacrifices only in one temple; nor could several other precepts of it be observed in countries at any considerable distance from thence: but the Christian consists "of every kindred, tongue, and people," Rev. v. 9, equally; and "offers unto the name of God in every place, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, incense and a pure offering." Mal. i. 11. The catholick Church then is the universal Church, spread through the world: and the catholick faith is the universal faith; "that form of doctrine," which the apostles "delivered," Rom. vi. 17, to the whole Church, and it received. What this faith was, we may learn from their writings, contained in the New Testament: and at so great a distance of time, we can learn it with certainty no where else. Every church or society of Christians, that preserves this catholick or universal faith, accompanied with true charity, is a part of the catholick or universal Church: and because the parts are of the same nature with the whole, it hath been usual to call every church singly, which is so qualified, a catholick church. And in this sense, churches, that widely differ in several notions and customs, may, notwithstanding, each of them, be truly catholick churches. But the Church of "Rome," which is one of the most corrupted parts of the catholick Church, both in faith and love, hath presumed to call itself the whole catholick Church, the universal Church; which it no more is, than one diseased limb, though perhaps the larger for being diseased, is the whole body of a man. And by attempting to exclude us, they take the direct way to exclude themselves, unless God impute their uncharitable way of thinking and acting, as we hope he will, to excusable ignorance and mistake. The Church of England pretends not indeed absurdly, to be the whole catholick Church; but is undoubtedly a sound and excellent member of it. So that we have much better ground to call ourselves catholicks, than they; were such names worth disputing about, which they are not: only one would not flatter and harden them, by giving them a title, which they both claim unjustly, and turn into an argument against us. *Abp. Secker.*

[q] *The Communion of Saints;*] The word "saints" is of the same meaning with the word "holy;" and therefore comprehends all Christians in the same manner as has been already explained. Having "communion" is being entitled to partake of benefits and kindnesses, and bound to make suitable returns for them. And thus Christians, or saints, have communion or "fellowship" with "the Father from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift:" with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3; Jam. i. 17; through whom forgiveness and mercy is conveyed to us: with the Holy Ghost, whose sanctifying graces are conferred on such, as duly qualify their hearts for the reception of them. And for these blessings we owe all thankfulness and all duty, in thought, word, and deed. Christians have also communion with the holy angels; as these "are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. i. 14: and undoubtedly we ought to think of what they do for us, with an inward sense of gratitude and love. But, as we are unacquainted with particulars we can make no particular acknowledgments: nor ought we to make any general ones, by outward expressions of respect: since "worshipping God alone" is commanded, Matt. iv. 10; and worshipping angels condemned in Scripture, Col. ii. 18.

With respect to those of our own nature, we are bound so far to hold communion even with the worst of unbelievers, as not only to do them every kind of justice, but sincerely to wish, and, if occasion offer, heartily endeavour, their good, both in body and soul. But to all, "who have obtained the like precious faith with our-

¶ *And after that, these Prayers*[s] *following, all devoutly kneeling; the Minister first pronouncing with a loud voice,*

The Lord be with you.
Answer. And with thy spirit.

Ruth ii. 4. 2 Thess. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 22.

selves," 2 Pet. i. 1, we bear a still nearer relation; as being, in a peculiar sense, children of the same Father, disciples of the same Master, animated by the same Spirit, members of the same body. And these things oblige us to the utmost care of preserving, by prudent order and mutual forbearance, as much unity in the Church, as we possibly can.

Such indeed, as obstinately deny the fundamental doctrines, or transgress the fundamental precepts of Christianity, ought to be rejected from Christian communion. But to renounce communicating with any others, who are willing to admit us to it on lawful terms, is the way to cut off ourselves, not them, from the body of Christ: who yet, we doubt not, will allow those on both sides to belong to his Church, who through pardonable passions or mistakes will not allow one another to do so.

And, as we should maintain communion with all proper persons, we should shew our disposition to it in all proper ways: attend on the publick instructions, join in the publick worship, sacraments, and discipline, which our Lord hath appointed; and keep the whole of them pure from all forbidden or suspicious alterations or mixtures: avoid, with great care, both giving and taking needless offence, in respect to these or any matters; and by all fit means "edify one another in love," Rom. xiv. 19; Eph. iv. 16: "obeying those, who are set over us;" condescending to those, who are beneath us; esteeming and honouring the wise and virtuous; teaching and admonishing the ignorant and faulty; bearing with the weak, relieving the poor, and comforting the afflicted.

Nor have we "communion" only with the "saints" on earth, but are of one city and one family, with such, as are already got safe to heaven. Doubtless they exercise that "communion" towards us by loving and praying for the brethren, whom they have left behind them. And we are to exercise it towards them; not by addressing petitions to them, which we are neither authorized to offer, nor have any grounds to think they can hear; but by rejoicing in their happiness; thanking God for the grace, which he hath bestowed on them, and the examples, which they have left us; holding their memories in honour; imitating their virtues; and beseeching the Disposer of all things, that, having followed them in holiness here, we may meet them in happiness hereafter; and become, in the fullest sense, "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God," Eph. ii. 19: "having with all those, that are departed in the true faith of his holy name, our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in his eternal and everlasting glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." See *Burial Office. Abp. Secker.*

[r] *Amen.*] That is, this confession or declaration of my belief I make sincerely, in the face of God, and of the whole church. *Dr. Bennet.*

We shall constantly perceive the vigour of our practice to be proportionable to the steadiness and liveliness of our faith: what revives one will always quicken the other. From every doctrine in the Creed issues a commandment; and the doctrine stirs us up to keep the commandment.

When by reciting the Creed we declare our belief in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with all that each has done for us; we should love "the Father" for his tender love, adore the "Almighty" for his infinite power, and commit our souls to him in well doing as to a faithful "Creator."

From "Jesus" we should seek salvation: from "Christ" the anointed, as a Prophet, instruction; as a Priest, atonement; as a King, protection; as the "only-begotten Son," the adoption of children. As "our Lord," we should serve him, for his "conception," in faith; for his "nativity," in humility; for his "sufferings," in patience; for his "cross," in crucifying sin; for his "death," in mortifying the flesh; for his "burial," in burying the old man with his evil desires; for his "descent," in meditating on the other world; for his "resurrection," in newness of life; for his "ascension and inthronization," in setting our affection on things above, on the pleasures at God's right-hand; for his "return," in awe of his second coming; for his "judgment," in judging ourselves before we come to be judged by him.

From the "Spirit" we should seek the breath of saving grace: that so in the "Church" we may partake of a high and heavenly calling; in the "holy Church," of sanctification; in the "catholick Church," of "communion" with our brethren in prayers and sacraments: and all this, in order to a firm persuasion of "the remission of our sins," as well as a confident hope of "resurrection," and translation to "life eternal."

Thus is the Creed at once a profession of faith, a manual of devotion, and a directory of practice. "The just shall live by faith." *Bp. Horne.*

[s] *And after that, these Prayers* &c.] Thus far, we trust, that order and variety have fully appeared, the beauty of holiness hath shone forth, in the principal parts of our service, as they are laid down in the Exhortation. We have seen the Church acknowledging her sins in the Confession: then "setting forth God's most worthy praise" in the Psalms; then "hearing his most holy word" in the Lessons; and after that, with one heart and one mouth, declaring her assent to the catholick faith in the Creed. And now having her conscience absolved from her sins, and her affections warmed with thanksgiving, and her understanding enlightened by the word, and her faith strengthened by her publick confession, how fit and prepared is she to enter solemnly on supplication and prayer, and "to ask those things that are necessary as well for the body as the soul," as they are appointed in the following parts of the service, namely, the Collects and Litany? *Dr. Bisse.*

Having all repeated our Creed together, and thereby given good proof that we are members of the catholick Church, and such as have a right to join in the prayers thereof, we now prepare ourselves to pray. And since salutations have ever been the expressions and badges of that mutual charity, without which we are not fit to pray, therefore we begin with an ancient form of salutation, taken out of holy Scripture: the minister commencing salutes the people with "The Lord be with you," Ruth ii. 4; Ps. cxxii. 8; 2 Thess. iii. 16: and they return it with a like prayer "And with thy spirit," 2 Tim. iv. 22. Which words have been of early use in the Christian

Minister. Let us pray[u].
Lord, have mercy upon us[v].

Liturgies; and indeed the phrase is the very words of St. Paul; and St. John forbids to say to any heretick "God speed," 2 John ver. 10, 11. But when the minister hath heard every one in the congregation repeat his faith, and seen by their standing up at it, a testimony of their assent to it, he can now safely salute them all as brethren and members of the true church: and surely, as difference in religion creates great animosities, so agreement in one faith is an excellent means to beget charity, and to make minister and people heartily pray for one another: the people are going to pray, which they cannot do without God's help, and therefore the minister prays that "the Lord may be with them," to assist them in the duty, according to that gracious promise of our Saviour, that when two or three are met to pray, he will be with them, Matt. xviii. 20. And since the minister prays for all the people, and is their mouth to God, they desire he may, heartily and devoutly, offer up these prayers in their behalf, saying, "The Lord be with thy spirit." *Dean Comber.*

By a man's spirit in Scripture phrase is frequently meant the man himself. So that the people do in reality answer thus, May God be with thee, as thou desirest he may be with us, in the oblation of our joint prayers. In this sense the word is used in the place, whence this form is borrowed, 2 Tim. iv. 22. *Dr. Bennet.*

Till every person has finished the repetition of the Creed, and there is silence in the whole congregation, the minister should not pronounce the words, "The Lord be with you." These words ought also to be pronounced by the minister in a standing posture, they being addressed to the people. And after the people have returned their answer, the minister should still stand, and pronounce these words, "Let us pray:" and then give the people time enough to kneel down, that there may not be the least noise, and every person may be perfectly composed, and ready to join, when the minister begins the prayers.

And because these words, "The Lord be with you," and the reply of the people, "And with thy spirit;" and those also, "Let us pray," are all of them directed and spoken, not to Almighty God, but only to men; namely, by the minister and people alternately to each other; therefore care should be taken, that a difference be made in the tone of voice, between these short forms of mutual compellation, and the prayers themselves. *Dr. Bennet.*

[u]*—all devoutly kneeling;*] When we make profession of our faith, we stand; when we acknowledge our sins, or seek unto God for favour, we fall down: because the gesture of constancy becometh us best in the one, in the other the behaviour of humility. *Hooker.*

So generally was this practice adopted and approved in the first ages of the Christian Church, that some of the zealous and holy fathers did not hesitate to rebuke even those who stood during prayers. But if standing was considered an improper posture, what would they think, were they to come into the congregations of modern Christians, and see the greater part of them sitting? They would undoubtedly conclude, either that the spirit of Christianity was materially altered, or that its influence was but little known amongst us. Certainly the religion of the Bible

Christ, have mercy upon us[x]. Ps. cxxiii. 3. Luke xvii. 13.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

does not consist in the mere external observance of forms: yet it must be allowed, that those forms, which the Bible itself prescribes for general use, ought to be generally adopted: and kneeling in prayer is one of these. *Rogers.*

[u]*Let us pray.*] These words are often used in ancient Liturgies, as well as in ours, and are an excitation to prayer, to call back our wandering, and recollect our scattered thoughts, and to awaken our devotion, bidding us mind what we are about; namely, now when we are about to pray, to pray indeed, that is, heartily and earnestly. The deacon, in ancient services, was wont to call upon the people often, "Let us pray vehemently;" nay, "still more vehemently;" and the same vehemency and earnest devotion, which the manner of these old Liturgies breathed, does our Church in her Liturgy call for, in these words, "Let us pray;" that is, with all the earnestness and vehemency that we may, that our prayers may be such as St. James speaks of, active lively-spirited prayers; for these are they that avail much with God. And there is none of us but must think it needful thus to be called upon and awakened; for thoughts will be wandering, and devotion will abate, and scarce hold out to the prayer's end, though it be a short one; so that well said the old hermit, whom Melancthon mentions in his discourse on prayer, "There is nothing harder than to pray."

These words, "Let us pray," as they are an incitation to prayer in general, so they may seem to be sometimes an invitation to another form of petitioning, as in the Litany and other places; it being as much as to say, Let us collect our alternate supplications by versicles and answers into collects or prayers. In the Latin Liturgies, their rubricks especially, "Preces" and "Orationes," seem to be thus distinguished; that "Preces," or supplications, were those alternate petitions, where the people answered by responsive versicles; "Oratio," or prayer, was that which was said by the priest alone, the people only answering "Amen." *Bp. Sparrow.*

[v]*Lord, have mercy upon us.* &c.] Being unclean like those lepers in Luke xvii. 11, 12, before we come near, we begin to cry, "Lord, have mercy upon us:" which form is taken out of David's Psalms, where it is sometimes repeated twice together, Ps. vi. 2; li. 1; cxxiii. 3: to which the Christian Church hath added a third, namely, "Christ, have mercy upon us;" that so it might be a short litany or supplication to every Person in the blessed Trinity. We have offended every Person, and are to pray to every Person, and therefore we beg mercy of them all. And indeed this "Lord have mercy upon us," (spoken by the Latin Church in the original Greek of the New Testament, "Kyrie eleeson," but much more prudently translated by ours into English, *Abp. Secker,*) is of great antiquity, both in the Eastern and the Western Churches. *Dean Comber.*

This is not only a confession, but a short litany: as it was called by the ancients. And it hath this resemblance with our larger Litany: for as in that we call on each Person of the Trinity by a distinct invocation, crying, first, "O God, the Father of heaven," secondly, "O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world," thirdly, "O God, the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable sinners:" so in this suppli-

¶ *Then the Minister, Clerks*[y], *and people, shall say the Lord's Prayer*[z] *with a loud voice.*

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As

cation thrice repeated we are taught to pray, saying, "Lord," the Father, "Christ," or Lord, the Son, "Lord," the Holy Ghost, "have mercy upon us." This threefold repetition of the words is with regard to the three Persons in the Trinity, to which it is thus thrice separately addressed. In the Greek Church the same words, "Lord, have mercy upon us," were thrice repeated: but the Latin Church, which borrowed it from the Greek, as appears by their still retaining the Greek words, "Kyrie eleeson," in their Liturgy, changed the second versicle into "Christe eleeson." *Dr. Bisse.*

It may be observed, that this earnest and humble supplication to the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was usually in old services, and so is in ours, set immediately before the Lord's Prayer, as a preparation to it; and very fitly: for as we cannot devise a more suitable preparation to prayer than this humble petition of mercy, and acknowledgment of our own misery; so is there no prayer, whereto greater preparation is required, than that divine prayer sanctified by the sacred lips of our Lord, wherein we say, "Our Father, &c." Clement advises us, when we say this prayer, to be careful to prepare ourselves, so that we may in some manner be worthy of this divine adoption to be the sons of God; lest, if we unworthily call him Father, he upbraid us as he did the Jews, Mal. i. 6. "If I be your Father, where is mine honour?" The sanctity of the Son is the honour of the Father. Indeed it is so great an honour to call God "Our Father," 1 John iii. 1, that we had need with all humility beg pardon of his majesty, before we venture upon so high a title. Therefore our mother the Church hath been careful to prepare us for this divine prayer, sometimes by a confession of our sins and absolution, as at Morning and Evening service, but most commonly by this short litany; first teaching us to bewail our unworthiness, and pray for mercy, and then with an humble boldness to look up to heaven, and call God "Our Father," and beg farther blessings of him. *Bp. Sparrow.*

This most humble and pathetick litany, directed to the blessed Trinity, is generally throughout the Liturgy placed before the Lord's prayer, as a proper introduction to it; the Church thereby seeming to intimate two things: first, as to the object of our worship; that this prayer, and by consequence our other prayers, of which this ought to be the pattern, is to be directed to the Trinity; and that by the word "Father" in the preface to it, not the first Person alone, but the other two are equally included; for we pray not, saying, "The Father," but "Our Father." The second thing intimated is, as to the manner of our worship: that we ought with all humility to approach his majesty, acknowledging that it is through his mercy we presume to call him "Father:" a name, which the Jews never used in prayer, having "received the spirit of bondage to fear," Rom. viii. 15; whereas we Christians have received at our baptism "the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." And for this reason, the catechumens in the ancient church, though embracing the faith and taught therein, yet being unbaptized and so unqualified to call God "Father," were not allowed to be present at the Lord's prayer, that prayer being then used only at the Communion service, which began after the catechumens were dismissed. *Dr. Bisse.*

The clerk and people are here to take notice, not to repeat the last of the versicles, "Lord, have mercy upon us," after the minister. In the end of the Litany indeed they ought to do it, because there they are directed to say all the three versicles distinctly after him; each of them being repeated in the Common Prayer-Book, namely, first in a Roman letter for the priest, and then in an Italick, which denotes the people's response. But in the daily Morning and Evening service, in the office for Solemnization of Matrimony, in those for the Visitation of the Sick, for the Burial of the Dead, for the Churching of Women, and in the Commination, where these versicles are single, and only the second printed in an Italick character, there they are to be repeated alternately, and not by way of repetition: so that none but the second versicle, "Christ, have mercy upon us," comes to the people's turn, the first and last belonging to the minister. *Wheatly.*

[x] Lord, have mercy upon us, *Christ, have mercy upon us.*] This is in different letters, to shew, that according to the ancient custom the people use to answer the minister, as at the end of the Litany. And it is to be noted, that the book does not every where injoin and prescribe every little order, what should be said or done; but takes it for granted, that people are acquainted with such common things, and things always used already. *Bp. Overall.*

[y] —*Clerks.*] By the clerks in this rubrick (which was first inserted in the second book of King Edward) I suppose were meant such persons as were appointed at the beginning of the Reformation, to attend the incumbent in his performance of the offices: and such as are still in some cathedral and collegiate churches, which have lay-clerks (as they are called, being not always ordained) to look out the lessons, name the anthem, set the psalms, and the like: of which sort I take our parish clerks to be, though we have now seldom more than one to a church. *Wheatly.* Parish clerks were heretofore read clerks, of whom every minister had at least one, to assist under him in the celebration of divine offices. *Dr. Burn.*

The word "clerk" is but once mentioned; and that is in the office of Matrimony. *Collis.*

[z] —*shall say the Lord's Prayer,*] Though this prayer was said before, namely, after the Absolution; yet that, as we observed, was a distinct office of itself, and separated from this, on which we are now entering, by the interposal of two distinct offices; namely, of praise as in the Psalms, and of hearing as in the Lessons. And therefore all now following the Creed being a distinct office, the insertion of the Lord's prayer here in the beginning serves, as to render it perfect, so also to distinguish it. *Dr. Bisse.*

As before we subjoined the Lord's prayer to our confession, to obtain the confirmation of our pardon; so now we prefix it to our requests, as a summary of our desires. And surely saying it again at such a distance, and with so

we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ *Then the Priest standing up*[a] *shall say*[b],

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
Ps. lxxxv. 7. *Answer.* And grant us thy salvation.

Priest. O Lord, save the King. 1 Sam. x. 24.

Answer. And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee. Ps. iv. 1.

Priest. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.

Answer. And make thy chosen people joyful[c]. Ps. cxxxii. 9.

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different a view, cannot be thought a vain repetition. *Abp. Secker.*

We are about to conclude this part of the Morning service with several important and solemn requests to Almighty God. But after what model can we better form these requests, than that which is here prescribed? The repetition of this form, which bears the royal stamp of divine authority, may probably be complained of by some. But the fervency of our devotion will not be at all abated by the frequent use of it, if our minds are alive to its real excellencies: nay, it may be fairly presumed, that to have this pattern before us, which our Saviour himself hath shewed us, will rather tend to animate our souls, and lead us to urge our petitions with renewed zeal, than be any impediment to our intercourse with the Father at the throne of grace. *Rogers.*

[a] *Then the Priest standing up*] The priest in the holy offices is sometimes appointed to kneel, sometimes to stand. The reason of this is as follows. The priest or minister, being a man of like infirmities with the rest of the congregation, a sinner, and so standing in need of grace and pardon, as well as the rest, in all confessions of sins and penitential prayers, such as the Litany is, is directed to beg his pardon and grace upon his knees. He being moreover a priest, or minister of the most high God, that hath received from him an office and authority, sometimes "stands," to signify "that his office" and authority. Which office of his may be considered, either in relation to God, or the people. As it relates to God, so he is God's ambassador, 2 Cor. v. 20; to whom is committed the "ministry of reconciliation," in which respect he is to "teach, baptize, consecrate the holy Eucharist, bless and absolve the penitent;" and in all these acts of authority, which he does in the name and person of Christ, he is to "stand." As his office relates to the people, so he is in their stead, for them appointed by God to offer up gifts and sacrifices to God, particularly the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, together with their prayers; so we read, Heb. v. 1, "every high priest, or priest," (so the words are promiscuously used, Heb. viii. 3, 4.) "taken from among men, is ordained for men," or in their stead, "in things pertaining to God, to offer up both gifts and sacrifices for sins." Which definition of a priest belongs not only to a priest of the Law, but also to a priest or minister of the Gospel. So that the ministers of the Gospel are appointed by God to offer up the sacrifices of prayers and praises of the Church for the people, thus to stand betwixt God and them; and to shew this his office, in these services he is directed to "stand." By this we may see what advantage it is to the people, that their prayers are offered up by a priest. For God having appointed him to this office, will certainly assist and accept his own constitution: and though the minister be wicked, or indevout in his prayers, yet God, that will punish this neglect in himself, will certainly accept of his office for the people. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[b] *—shall say,*] Before the minister begins to pray alone for the people, they are first to join with him according to the primitive way of praying in some short versicles and responsals taken chiefly out of David's psalms, and containing the sum of all the following collects; the first, "O Lord, shew thy mercy, &c," Ps. lxxxv. 7, being a petition for mercy and salvation, answers to the Sunday collect: the second, "O Lord, save the king," Ps. xx. 9, (according to the Greek translation) for a blessing upon his majesty, answers to the collects for the king and his family: the third, "Endue thy ministers, &c," Ps. cxxxii. 9, and the fourth, "O Lord, save thy people, &c," Ps. xxviii. 9, for the success of ministers and the prosperity of their people, these two answer the collect for the clergy and people: the fifth, "Give peace in our time, &c," 1 Chron. xxii. 9, for safety from our enemies, answers the morning and evening collects for peace and safety: the sixth, "O God, make clean &c," Ps. li. 10, 11, for the help of God's Spirit, answers the morning and evening collects for grace. And thus we have the sum of all the ensuing prayers, which minister and people must devoutly join in by this alternate way of responses, to fit them the better for the following collects. *Dean Comber.*

It appears that the suiting of these scriptural sentences to the prayers following could not have been the intention of the original compilers of our service, because some of the prayers, namely, those for the king, for the royal family, and for the clergy and people, were added afterwards at different times: so that these sentences were not designed as compendiums of their respective prayers, but rather the prayers were added as paraphrases on these sentences. The result is a natural harmony of correspondence between them: so that the different parts of the service hang together, and answer to each other. *Dr. Bisse.*

These versicles and all others elsewhere, as already observed, though pronounced vocally by the minister and people alternately, are notwithstanding to be mentally joined in throughout by them both. *Dr. Bennet.* Indeed otherwise the sense is not perfect. For each versicle and answer being connected by the conjunction "and," or, as in one instance, by "because," they are but a continuation of the same petition, though put into two sentences, and appointed respectively for the minister and the people. *Dr. Bisse.*

[c] *And make thy chosen people joyful.*] Namely, the laity, who are through Christ God's "chosen people." *Dr. Bennet.* This petition, as well as the two following, is taken from the psalms; Ps. cxxxii. 9, and xxviii. 9: and it is plain that the words "thy chosen people," or, as

Priest. O Lord, save thy people.

Answer. And bless thine inherit-
Ps. xxviii. 9. ance.

Priest. Give peace in our time, O
1 Chron. xxii. 9. Lord.

Answer. Because there is none other[d] that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17, 20.

Priest. O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Answer. And take not thy holy Spirit from us. Ps. li. 10, 11.

¶ *Then shall follow three Collects*[e]*; the first of the*

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in the original, "the saints" and "thy people" and "thine inheritance," all mean precisely the same thing; being applied by the psalmist to the people of the Jews, and by us to the whole body of Christians; for by these and such titles both the one and the other are usually distinguished from heathens, or unbelievers, throughout the sacred writings. *Waldo.*

[d] *Give peace in our time, O Lord. Because there is none other* &c.] The meaning of this petition is, that whatever help we have besides, we look upon it as nothing, without that of the Almighty: whom therefore we beg, when we are in peace, to continue it, by restraining such as would disturb it; and when we are not, to restore it, by turning the hearts, or overthrowing the attempts, of those who have infringed it. *Abp. Secker.*

[e] *Then shall follow three Collects;*] Our Saviour himself taught and commended the frequent use of brief forms of prayer; and the primitive Christians were wont to pray in that manner, from whom these Collects were derived; and they are called "Collects," because they are collected generally out of the Epistle and Gospel, and because they are a very brief collection of all things necessary for soul and body; or, if we respect the phrase of the ancients, because they were repeated in publick when the people were collected or gathered together: and the form of them is, that they generally are directed to the Father, through the Son, and usually they begin with the motive inducing us to ask, and then mention some great or comprehensive blessing desired, concluding with the ground of our hope, that we shall obtain it through Jesus Christ. They are most of them above a thousand years old, having been used in the Western Church from the time of St. Gregory the Great, and many of them before, and are so plain, they will need no explication. *Dean Comber.*

Though it hath been a constant practice from the beginning, for the people to bear a vocal part by their suffrages and answers in the publick service of God, which for that very reason was by the ancients called Common Prayer, yet for the more renewing and strengthening of their earnestness and importunity, they desired that both they and their devotions should in the close be recommended to God by the priest, they all adjoining their assent, and saying Amen to it.

As to the particular Collects in our Liturgy, they being of so frequent use, and so considerable a part of the devotion of our Church, it may be convenient to observe as follows:

1. Concerning their authors and their antiquity. Our Church endeavouring to preserve, not only the spirit, but the very forms, as much as may be, and in a known tongue, of ancient primitive devotion, hath retained these very Collects, the most of them, among other precious remains of it: for we find by ancient testimony that they were composed or ordered, either by St. Ambrose, Gelasius, or Gregory the Great.

2. For the object of these Collects, they are directed to God in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; for so usually they conclude, and very fitly: for Christ is indeed the altar upon which all our prayers are to be offered, that they may be acceptable; "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," John xvi. 23. And so it was the custom of old. But yet we may observe, that a few Collects are directed to Christ, and in the Litany some supplications to the Holy Ghost, besides that precatory hymn of "Veni Creator" in the Book of Ordination; and that some Collects, especially for great festivals, conclude with this acknowledgment, "that Christ with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth one God world without end." And this seems to be done, to testify what the Scripture warrants, that, although for more congruity we in the general course of our prayers go to the Father by the Son, yet we may also invocate both the Son and the Holy Ghost; and that, while we call upon one, we equally worship and glorify all three together.

3. For their form and proportion, as they are not one long continued prayer, but diverse short ones, they have many advantages to gain esteem: the practice of the Jews of old, in whose prescribed devotions we find a certain number of several prayers or collects to be said together; the example of our Lord in prescribing a short form; the judgment and practice of the ancient Christians in their Liturgies; and St. Chrysostom, among others, commends highly short and frequent prayers with little distances between; and lastly, they are most convenient for keeping away coldness, distraction, and illusions from our devotion; and that not only in respect of the minister, but the people also, whose minds and affections become hereby more erect, close, and earnest, by the oftener breathing out of their hearty concurrence, and saying all of them Amen together, at the end of each Collect.

4. The matter of them is most excellent and remarkable. It consists usually of two parts: an humble acknowledgment of the adorable perfection and goodness of God, and a congruous petition for some benefit from him. The first is seen not only in the Collects for special festivals or benefits, but in those also that are more general; for even in such, what find we in the beginning of them, but some or other of these and the like acknowledgments? "That God is Almighty, everlasting, full of goodness and pity, the strength, refuge, and protector of all that trust in him, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, no continuing in safety or being: that such is our weakness and frailty, that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves, to do any good, to stand upright, cannot but fall; that we put no trust in any

Day[f], *which shall be the same that is appointed at the Communion; the second for Peace; the third for Grace to live well*[g]. *And the two last Collects shall never alter, but daily be said at Morning Prayer throughout all the year, as followeth; all kneeling.*

The second Collect, for Peace[h].

O God, who art the author of peace[i] and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our

1 Cor. xiv. 33. Is. xlv. 7. Ps. cxxxiii. 1. 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

thing that we do, but lean only upon the help of his heavenly grace; that he is the author and giver of all good things, from whom it comes that we have an hearty desire to pray, or do him any true or laudable service; that he is always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we desire or deserve, having prepared for them that love him such good things as pass man's understanding."

These, and the like expressions, can be no other than the breathings of the primitive Christians, who with all self-denial made the grace of God their hope, refuge, protection, petition, and profession against all proud hereticks and enemies of it: and the petitions which follow these humble and pious acknowledgments and praises, are very proper, holy, and good. *Bp. Sparrow.*

The people here should remember, that these Collects and the following prayers are to be vocally pronounced by the minister alone, though the people are to join mentally therein. The congregation should therefore be careful not to disturb each other by uttering their prayers in an audible manner contrary to the design and rule of the Church. *Dr. Bennet.*

[f] *—the first of the Day,*] As on every day or season there is something more particularly recommended to our meditations by the Church; so the first Collect reflects chiefly upon that, though sometimes more generally upon the whole matter of the Epistle and Gospel, desiring inspiration, strength, and protection from God Almighty in the practice and pursuance of what is set before us. *Bp. Sparrow.*

Besides the Lord's day, which is the weekly memorial of all God's goodness to us and our duty to Him, we have annual ones, to celebrate, not only the principal parts of the history of Christ, but also the holy lives and deaths of his chief followers, who are mentioned in the New Testament. For, as "the righteous are to be had in everlasting remembrance," Ps. cxii. 6; and the Epistle to the Hebrews particularly directed the first Christians to "remember them, which had had the rule over them, who had spoken unto them the word of God," Heb. xiii. 7; as they did accordingly pay distinguished honours to the memories of the apostles, evangelists, and martyrs; and as the Church of Rome, which had gone much too far in this matter, would notwithstanding have had a great advantage against us, if we had neglected it intirely: we do therefore on the days, which bear their names, read portions of holy writ relating to them; return thanks to God for their labours and example; and beg, that we may profit suitably by them. This then makes a considerable portion of the variable Collects. The rest are appointed, one for each sunday and week in the year. And the intention, however imperfectly executed, must have been, that sometimes praying more explicitly for this grace or mercy, sometimes for that, we may be likelier to obtain, through God's goodness, all that are needful for us.

The objection, that our service is taken from the Popish, affects chiefly the Collects. But those of ours, which are the same with theirs, are mostly derived from Prayer Books, brought over in the days of that Pope, by whose means our Saxon ancestors were converted to Christianity, above 1100 years ago: and they were old ones then; much older than the main errors of popery. However, partly at, and partly since, the Reformation, such of the Collects in those books, as wanted and deserved it, have been carefully corrected; many, that were thought improper, quite removed; and new ones framed in their stead. But why should those be changed, which are both faultless in themselves, and recommended by venerable antiquity? *Abp. Secker.*

Concerning the particular Collects, see below, in connection with the Epistles and Gospels.

[g] *The second for Peace; the third for Grace to live well.*] Peace and grace comprehend all temporal and spiritual blessings, and therefore are to be the subject of our daily prayers. *Dean Comber.*

[h] *—for Peace.*] The Greek Church prayed thrice for peace in the daily service: the Latin twice, as we also do in forms very ancient and comprehensive. *Dean Comber.* This prayer is translated from the Latin, being taken out of the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great. *Dr. Nicholls.*

Peace is used in Scripture for all earthly blessings, because it is the mother and the nurse of them all; it is the most comprehensive benefit on earth, and the type of heaven; wherefore the old Christians followed after it in their lives, and begged it in their prayers; and to encourage us to pray for it, our "God" is represented here as the "author of peace," Isa. xlv. 7, and the "lover of concord," Ps. cxxxiii. 1. He keeps us in peace, and loves us when we live in peace together, he makes us have peace from without, and delights when we have concord within, and so no doubt will be well pleased to hear us pray for that which he is so able to give, and so delighted with wherever he finds it. *Dean Comber.*

Peace was our Lord's legacy: "My peace I leave with you." He prayed for peace, paid for peace, wept for it, bled for it. Peace should therefore be dear to us; all kinds of peace, outward peace and all: for if there be not a quiet and peaceable life, there will hardly be godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. ii. 2. *Bp. Sparrow.*

In this Collect we beseech God, "in the knowledge of whom standeth our" hope of "eternal life" hereafter, and "whose service," in proportion as we improve it, gives us here "perfect freedom" from the tyranny of sin, and the stings of an evil conscience, that he would likewise so "defend us in all assaults of our" outward "enemies, that trusting in *him*, we may not fear *them*." Thus we embolden ourselves from the consideration of his greater mercies, to hope for the less: in imitation of the apostle's reasoning, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. *Abp. Secker.*

[i] *O God, who art the author of peace* &c.] It may be observed with respect to the form of our Collects, that the preface is frequently addressed to God with regard

[l] John xvii. 3. eternal life, whose service is perfect
Jam. i. 25. John viii. 36. freedom; Defend us thy humble ser-
Ps. lix. 1. vants in all assaults of our enemies;
that we, surely trusting in thy de-
fence, may not fear the power of any
Ps. cxviii. 6. Eph. vi. 11. adversaries, through the might of
Is. lxiii. 1. Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The third Collect for Grace[k].

O Lord, our heavenly Father[l],
Almighty and everlasting God,
who hast safely brought us to the
beginning of this day[m]; Defend us Acts xvii. 28.
in the same with thy mighty power;
and grant that this day we fall into

to some such particular attribute, as is a ground both for the nature of the petition, and for our hopes of acceptance. Thus, to instance in the standing Collects for the daily service, when we pray for peace, we invoke God as "the author of peace and lover of concord:" when for protection, as an "Almighty and everlasting God:" when for the King, as "King of kings, and Lord of lords:" when for the defence of the Church, that is, the whole congregation of people under their Bishops and Curates, among and from all her enemies, a work of the greatest power, yea, a standing miracle, we say, "Almighty God, who alone workest great marvels."

Thus in many others we shall find these prefaces no improper repetitions; but generally varying with the matter of the prayer, and relating to, and being of a piece with it. But, as in some few Collects the divine attribute mentioned in the preface may have no direct reference to the matter of the petition, yet it always serves to strengthen the faith of the petitioner. For instance, suppose it were God's goodness, as, "O most gracious God," or his power, as, "O Almighty God;" both these serve to strengthen our hopes of acceptance, whatever our petition be: God's goodness, by certifying that he is willing to help us; his power, by certifying that he is able to do so. And thus the preface to our Lord's Prayer relates, not to the particular petitions contained in it, but rather to all prayer in general; intimating to us God's readiness to hear us, whatever we ask, because he is "our Father;" and his ability to grant it to us, because "he is in heaven." *Dr. Bisse.*

These prefaces then give life to the petition, and to the faith of the petitioner; and so carry with them great usefulness and beauty. On the other hand the conclusions of our prayers generally run in the same form; namely, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or, what amounts to the same thing, "through his merits and mediation," or the like expressions: which is done in obedience to the command of Christ himself. *Dr. Bisse.* And thus we are continually reminded to lift up our hearts to him, and to rest our faith in his merits and mediation, on which all our hopes and expectations from God intirely depend. *Wheatly.*

[k] *The third Collect for Grace.*] This follows the Collect for peace, for God hath joined them in Scripture, 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3; and we must not separate them in our devotions, because grace alone makes peace true, beneficial, and lasting. The former Collect is for freedom from the evil of punishment; this from the evil of sin. *Dean Comber.* We here pray "for grace to live well:" for if there be not peace with God by an holy life, there will never be peace in the world. No man can so much as think a good thought, much less lead a godly life, without the grace of God: therefore this is also prayed for, together with God's protection for the day or night following. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[l] *O Lord, our heavenly Father,* &c.] The very name of grace shews that it is the free gift of God: of him therefore we must ask it, James i. 5. And the Church hath selected such attributes of his, as are most proper to quicken our hopes of obtaining it. We are frail creatures on earth and need it exceedingly, but he is the "Lord our heavenly Father," and so both loves and pities us: we are weak, but he is "Almighty," and therefore able to help us: our span of life is measured by days and nights, but he is an "everlasting God," always the same without any change, and therefore ever ready to hear us: and as a further ground of our hope, that he will grant us grace to defend us in this day, we are taught thankfully to own that it is he "who safely" kept us in soul and body the night past, and "brought us" intire in both "to the beginning of this day;" and as he hath begun it with his mercy, we must begin it with his praise, Lam. iii. 22, 23. *Dean Comber.*

This Collect is not taken from the Roman, but principally from the Greek service, as others of our prayers besides are: the compilers of our Liturgy prudently extracting from both, what was proper to enrich and add authority to the work, in which they were engaged. And it begs that protection of God more especially for the present day, which the former begs in general: but above all, "that we may fall into no sin" even undesignedly, much less "run into any kind of danger" of it wilfully, but "do always what is righteous in his sight." *Abp. Secker.*

[m] —*the beginning of this day;*] The natural day of twenty-four hours is divided into two parts; the beginning or former part, and the night or the latter part. So that the word "beginning" in this place must not be understood too strictly, as if it signified only the day-break, or the former part of the morning. Nor must the word "night" in the third Collect for evening prayer be understood too strictly, as if it signified only that portion of time, when it is dark. Accordingly we find the Scriptures also speaking much after the same manner, saying, "The evening and the morning were the first day," Gen. i. 5: for, as Bp. Patrick observes upon the place, In the Hebrew language Evening and Morning signify a whole day. *Dr. Bennet.*

Of these two Collects, namely, "for peace" and "for grace," as they are intitled and distinguished, the former comprises all temporal goods, such as are "necessary for the body;" the latter all spiritual goods, such as are "necessary for the soul." And in this sense and latitude they were understood by the compilers of our Liturgy: who therefore closed the morning and evening service here, adding only the prayer of St. Chrysostom and the

no sin, neither run into any kind of
Jude 24. danger; but that all our doings may
Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *In Quires and Places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem*[n].

¶ *Then these five Prayers following*[o] *are to be read here, except when the Litany is read; and then only the two last are to be read, as they are there placed.*

A Prayer for the King's Majesty[p].

O Lord our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, 16.
Lord of lords, the only Ruler of Dan. ii. 47.

blessing. Thus they thought they answered the purpose of assembling together, as stated in the Exhortation; which was to "ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul." *Dr. Bisse.*

These Collects, both in the morning and in the evening service, were plainly intended to be constantly used every day: and though few of us have an opportunity of doing this in publick, yet we may all use them so in private, making them a part of our secret devotions. And indeed how can we so properly begin and end the day, as with these pious addresses to our great Creator and Preserver? how so well imprint in our minds an humble and grateful sense of our dependence on him, who is the Giver of all good gifts, both temporal and spiritual? Long forms of prayer may be irksome and tedious; and many persons have neither time nor inclination to use them. But surely no Christian can plead any good excuse for neglecting to employ at least some few minutes of the day in the use of those excellent prayers, which our Church prescribes: which are the more excellent for being short; and are infinitely more useful and edifying than all other devotional compositions whatsoever. *Waldo.*

[n] *In quires and places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem.*] The original of which is probably derived from the very first Christians: for Pliny has recorded that it was the custom for them in his time to meet upon a fixed day before light, and to sing a hymn, in parts or by turns, to Christ as God. The practice was soon established throughout the Church, and has universally obtained ever since. *Wheatly.* The Church thinks this the most proper place for singing, where there is a sort of division in the service. For the foregoing Collects respect ourselves: those following respect others. If therefore there be any singing before the conclusion of the service, this is the place where it should be practised, and not after the second lesson, as is sometimes done; both because after the second lesson a proper hymn or psalm is appointed, which is interrupted by a singing psalm coming between, and so far the rubrick is not conformed to; and also because, this being the time specially appointed for singing, to sing at this time, if at all, is to conform to the appointment of the Church. *Dr. Bisse., Wheatly.* Concerning parochial psalmody, see the note after the "Thanksgivings."

[o] *Then these five prayers following.*] The three first of these prayers were not in our Liturgy at its first establishment, as already intimated. See p. 42. note *m*. Two of them, namely the first and last, were inserted by order of Queen Elizabeth, being framed from Gregory's Sacramentary, nearly word for word: the second was inserted by order of King James the First, who was the first protestant prince that was married and had children. They were all three, till the last review, printed at the end of the Litany: but were read in the same place or manner, as they are now expressly appointed. Although added afterwards in the service, they are well connected with the preceding Collects. For peace is the great and summary blessing to us as men, the subjects of civil government: and grace is the same to us as Christians, the members of a spiritual society, that is, the Church. Now, because the former blessing is conveyed to us by the wise government of our temporal rulers, there follows a prayer for the King: and because the latter is derived to us by the administration of our spiritual governors, there follows a prayer for the Bishops and Clergy, and the charge committed to them. *Dr. Bisse.*

[p] *A Prayer for the King's Majesty.*] The supreme King of all the world is God, by whom all mortal kings reign; and since his authority sets them up, and his power only can defend them, therefore all mankind, as it were by common consent, have agreed to pray to God for their kings. It is well known that the Heathens made sacrifices, prayers, and vows for them; and Scripture records that the Persian kings desired to be prayed for at the temple of Jerusalem, Ezra vi. 10, as the Roman emperors did also afterward: the Jews had special forms of prayer for their kings, Ps. xx, and Ps. lxxii: but we Christians are expressly injoined to pray for kings, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; and all the ancient Fathers, Liturgies, and Councils are full of evidences that this was done daily: "We celebrate daily prayers to our God, in every one of our churches, for your empire," saith a Council (in St. Ambrose's time) to the emperors. And our old Saxon Councils do frequently decree this shall be done. And St. Paul shews it is the people's interest, as well as the princes; for we pray that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives under them in all godliness and honesty, and in their peace we shall have peace also. As for this form, it was made by the first Reformers of this Church of England, which is famous for its untainted loyalty above all churches in the world, as both the practice of its true sons, and this excellent prayer do shew. *Dean Comber.*

The duties of the royal station being very important and difficult, and the hazards of erring and sinning in it many and great, we therefore pray him, who is "the only Ruler" of the heart and conduct "of princes," and "beholds" the state of "all the dwellers" in their dominions every where "on earth, to replenish our Sovereign," both "with the graces and the gifts" needful for him: "to grant him long to live in health and wealth," that is, prosperity; as we pray God, in the Litany, "to deliver us in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth;" "to strengthen him, that he may overcome all his enemies," all that wish ill to him or his people; and finally to bestow on him "everlasting felicity." *Abp. Secker.*

Eccles. viii. 4. Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. Is. lxvi. 1. princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lord, King 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. *GEORGE*[q]; and so replenish him with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that he may alway incline to thy Ps. cxix. 33, 34, 35. will, and walk in thy way: Endue 1 Kings iii. 9—12. him plenteously with heavenly gifts; Ps. lxxii. 1. grant him in health and wealth long Ezra vi. 10. Ps. lxi. 6. to live; strengthen him that he may vanquish and overcome all his ene- Ps. lxxxix. 21, 22, 23. xxi. 1. mies[r]; and finally, after this life, he may attain everlasting joy and Matt. xvi. 26. felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Royal Family[s].

ALMIGHTY God, the fountain of all goodness, we humbly be- Jam. i. 17. Ps. xxxvi. 9. seech thee to bless their Royal High- Jer. ii. 13. nesses *George* Prince of *Wales*, the Princess of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family: Endue them with thy holy Ezra vi. 10. Spirit; enrich them with thy hea- 1 Chron. xxix. 19. venly grace; prosper them with all 2 Sam. vii. 29. happiness; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Clergy and people[t]

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels; Send down upon our Bi- Ps. cxxxvi. 3, 4.

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[q] *Our most gracious Sovereign Lord King George;*] Whom we name in the office, as the ancients were wont to do both in the Eastern and Western Churches. *Dean Comber.* When the emperors became Christian, they were particularly named in the Liturgies, with titles expressing the dearest affection and the most honourable respect. *Wheatly.*

The whole of this prayer is happily adapted to that spirit of loyalty, which our Church on all occasions recommends; and no person, void of that spirit, can join in it without gross hypocrisy. The language is remarkably noble and sublime: the introductory part grand and solemn: and the several petitions that follow are extremely pertinent and proper. May God give us all grace to use it with sincerity and devotion; and to shew in the whole course of our lives and conversations that loyalty, which is one distinguishing mark of the disciples of Christ. *Waldo.*

[r] *—that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies,*] This and similar passages in our Liturgy have been sometimes misrepresented, as recommending aggrandisement and conquest. On Christian principles the Church must presuppose, that Christian princes will engage in no wars, which are not undertaken in just and necessary defence. She knows, that all war, excepting in cases of unjust aggression from abroad, or unnecessary resistance to the measures of government at home, is equally repugnant both to the letter and spirit of the Christian religion. In her offices day by day she prays for peace. In her Litany, or general supplication, thrice a week, she deprecates war, and from "battle and murder" intreats deliverance. Whenever she prays for a blessing on the arms of the sovereign, and for victory over all his enemies, she must be understood to pray for the ends of victory: the preservation of the lawful and just rights of his majesty and of these realms, deliverance from the power of enemies, and the restoration of quietness and peace. *Shepherd.*

[s] *A Prayer for the Royal Family.*] This was added in conformity to that ancient desire of the Persian emperor, Ezra vi. 10; that the Jewish priests would pray for the life of the king and his sons; and among the Romans the heirs of the empire were prayed for as well as the emperor, as Tacitus relates: the primitive Christians also prayed for the imperial family; and the canons of old Councils, both at home and abroad, do injoin it: and our Reformers have composed an excellent form to do it by. *Dean Comber.*

Because the royal family are the future hopes of the publick, and in the mean while their whole behaviour is of very great consequence to it; we apply more distinctly than the ancient Church did, but surely with reason, to "the Fountain of all goodness," who therefore is able to supply the branches, as well as the root, for such blessings on every branch, especially the principal by name, as their condition requires. *Abp. Secker.*

But let us not suppose that we have discharged our duty by only praying for them. Something more is certainly required of us: for, if we are bound to honour our sovereign, we ought surely to pay a suitable regard and reverence to those, that are so nearly related to him: not to listen to every idle and scandalous report, which malice may propagate concerning them; but to think, and speak, of them with affection and respect; to admire and applaud their virtues; and to conceal, rather than publish, their failings. *Waldo.*

[t] *A Prayer for the Clergy and people.*] Holy Scripture is full of prayers for the Church of God, and particularly for the governors and pastors thereof, and all the ancient Liturgies have peculiar petitions for the bishops and the clergy, as well as for the congregations committed to their charge: Synesius a primitive Bishop writes to his clergy to pray for him in all their churches; and our Saxon Councils ordain daily prayers shall be made for the bishop and for the Church of

shops, and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace[u]; and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ[x]. *Amen.*

2 Thess. iii. 1. i. 11. Luke xi. 13. Tit. ii. 11. Col. i. 9, 10. 1 John ii. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 5. 2 Thess. i. 12.

God; which order we observe in this ancient form. *Dean Comber.*

The Church, for which this prayer is offered, is excellently described by "bishops, curates, and the people committed to their charge." By curates here are not meant stipendiaries, as now it is used to signify, but all those, whether parsons or vicars, to whom the bishop, who is the chief pastor under Christ, hath committed the cure of souls of some part of his flock, and who are thus the bishop's curates. The bishop with these curates, and the flock or congregation committed to their charge, make up a Church. For according to our Saviour's definition, a Church is a "shepherd, and his sheep that will hear his voice;" to which St. Cyprian's description agrees, "The Church is a congregation of believers united to their bishop, and a flock adhering to their shepherd; whence you ought to know, says he, that the Church is in the bishop, and the bishop in the Church, and they, that are not with the bishop, are not in the Church." Now because the bishops are the guides and governors of the Church, so that all acts of the Church are ordered and directed by them, as the same St. Cyprian says; therefore the custom of the Church always was, and not without reason, to pray particularly by name for their bishop, as they did for the king.

To make this Church, to gather it from among infidels and heathens, and to preserve it from all her subtile and potent enemies, "by the healthful Spirit of his grace," is an act of as great power, and a greater miracle of love, than to create the world. "Although thou beest wonderful, O Lord, in all thy works, yet thou art believed to be most wonderful in thy works of piety and mercy," says St. Augustin: and therefore the preface is suitable, "Almighty God, who alone workest great marvels, send down upon thy Church, bishops, curates, and the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace." *Bp. Sparrow.*

In this prayer we beseech Almighty God, that he, "who alone worketh great marvels;" who hath in all ages marvellously protected his Church against the devil and wicked men; who endued his apostles with marvellous and miraculous gifts on the day of Pentecost, and by their means many others; who doth and ever will produce marvellous effects on the hearts of believers by the ministry of his word and sacraments; and who only can do such things; would "send down the healthful," that is, the healing, strengthening, and saving "Spirit of his grace, on all bishops and curates;" persons, to whom the cure or care of souls is intrusted: for this the word "curates" signifies throughout the Prayer-Book, not merely those persons, who assist the proper incumbent; and likewise on "all congregations committed to their charge." And we further beseech him, not only to bestow on them at first good dispositions; but, "that they may truly" and lastingly "please him," to "pour upon them his continual blessing," like a kindly "dew" descending from above. "For neither is he, that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase," 1 Cor. iii. 7. *Abp. Secker.*

[u]—*the healthful Spirit of thy grace;*] The Spirit of God's grace is, according to the Scripture idiom, God's gracious Spirit. And is therefore called healthful, because he brings health, that is holiness, to the soul. *Dr. Bennet.*

As the influences of the Holy Spirit, in a greater or less degree, are absolutely necessary to be experienced by every individual, that would be a Christian indeed; so are they more especially by those, who are appointed to teach the way of salvation to others. For he that teacheth, and he that learneth, must be assisted by the same master: they must be renewed by the same grace, and derive their spiritual health from the same source. We acknowledge this, when we pray, that God would send down upon his ministers, and the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of his grace. *Rogers.*

[x]—*our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ.*] An advocate is one, that pleads the cause of another in a court of justice. Therefore Jesus Christ is called our Advocate, because he pleads our cause with his offended heavenly Father, and causes our pardon to be sealed, and our persons, accused by our sins, to be acquitted by him. He is also our Mediator: that is, the person, who transacts the grand affair of reconciliation between God and his creatures. He intercedes for us, and is continually offering up his own merits for our sakes, to rescue and skreen us by his all perfect righteousness from that damnation, to which we otherwise must have been eternally liable. *Dr. Bennet.*

Neither ministers nor people must ask for the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, with a view to advance their own glory and importance in the Church. The honour of our Advocate and Mediator must be the grand end of our petitions. It is Jesus who procures for us, by his intercession with the Father, both the Spirit and the blessing. Let him have the honour of all the good, we have ever received; and of all the hope, and joy, and comfort, we have ever experienced. And as nothing can tend more effectually to promote his glory and the promotion of his religion in the world, than that his Church should be governed by wise and pious rulers; his ordinances conducted by zealous and holy ministers; and his house filled with humble, teachable, and godly people; we have good reason to pray that the Lord will give grace to all bishops and pastors of his Church, that they may diligently preach his word, and duly administer the godly discipline thereof; and that he will grant to the people, that they may obediently follow the same; that all may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. *Rogers.*

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom[y].

Heb. xii. 28. ALMIGHTY God[z], who hast given us grace at this time
Acts i. 14. ii. 1. with one accord to make our common
Eph. vi. 18. supplications[a] unto thee, and dost promise, that when two or three are
Acts xii. 12. gathered together in thy Name[b] thou
Matt. xviii. 20. 1 John v. 14, 15. wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Ps. cxlv. 18, 19. xx. 5. Matt. xxvi. 39. 1 Tim. ii. 3. 4. Rom. vi. 22, 23.

2 *Cor.* xiii.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ[c], and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

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[y] *A Prayer of St. Chrysostom.*] Where ancient Liturgies afforded proper prayers, our Reformers chose to retain them rather than compose new ones: therefore, as some are kept from the Western offices, so this is taken out of the Eastern, where it is daily used in the Liturgies both of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom, who is agreed to be the author of it. And it is very proper for a concluding prayer. *Dean Comber.*

It is taken from the middle of St. Chrysostom's Liturgy; but much more judiciously placed in the close of ours. It first thankfully confesses the great goodness of our blessed Redeemer, in disposing our minds, of themselves so variously and wrongly inclined, to ask unanimously of him such things as we ought, and encouraging our applications by such explicit assurances of hearing us. Then it submits intirely to his wisdom, in what manner, and how far, he will think it for our good to grant us any of our particular requests: begging nothing absolutely, but what he hath absolutely engaged to bestow on our prayers and endeavours; namely, that practical "knowledge" here "of his truth," his doctrines and precepts, his promises and threatenings, that hereafter we may attain "everlasting life" and happiness. *Abp. Secker.*

Neither this nor the following benedictory prayer is at the end of either the Morning or Evening service, in any of the old Common Prayer Books; which all of them conclude with the third Collect. But the prayer of St. Chrysostom is at the end of the Litany, from the very first book of King Edward; and the benedictory prayer from that of Queen Elizabeth; and there also stood the prayers for the King, the Royal Family, for the Clergy and people, till the last review. And I suppose, though not printed, they were always used, as now, at the conclusion of the daily service. For after the third Collect, the Scotch Liturgy directs, that "then shall follow the Prayer for the King's Majesty, with the rest of the Prayers at the end of the Litany, to the Benediction." *Wheatly.*

[z] *Almighty God,* &c.] It is a general rule in our Liturgy, (except in the Litany, in some few of the Collects, and in the Hymn "Veni Creator Spiritus" in the Ordination service,) to address our prayers to the Person of the Father, in the name and through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the prayer of St. Chrysostom is directed immediately to the Son, as appears plainly from the promise referred to in the introductory part, which our Saviour made in his own person, whilst he dwelt on earth; and also from the omission of the usual words, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," at the end. Not that, when we address ourselves to one Person only in the blessed Trinity, we are to exclude the others from our thoughts; since they are one undivided nature or substance, the joint objects of our faith and worship. Accordingly it is justly remarked in the Nicene Creed, that "the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;" and, in the Athanasian, that "in all things the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped." *Waldo.*

[a] *—common supplications*] That is, joint or united: such as are "common" to more persons than one; or such as more persons than one bear part in. Thus "common supplications" are opposed to private supplications, or such supplications as a person pours forth in his closet, when no one joins in prayer with him. And for this reason our established Liturgy is called a "Book of Common Prayer," that is, a book containing such forms of prayer, as people meet together to join in, and with united hearts and affections to offer up to God at the same time. *Dr. Bennet.*

[b] *—when two or three are gathered together in thy Name* &c.] This is founded on that gracious promise of Christ, Matt. xviii. 19, 20, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is in the midst of them;" that is, he will give them this assurance of his presence, that he "will grant their requests," 1 John v. 15. Perhaps we are but few at common prayer; but since we come as his disciples, in obedience to his precepts, to ask in his name alone, we are sure that Jesus is among us, and hears our prayers; and then such is his love to us and power with God, that we doubt not to obtain them. And oh! whom would it not move, to lay aside all needless impediments, and come to prayers, when we are sure to meet the Lord Jesus there! *Dean Comber.*

[c] *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* &c.] It was ever the custom to dismiss the people from religious assemblies with a "final blessing" both in the Jewish and Christian church, pronounced by the priest, and received by the people on their knees; nor ought any one to go out before it was given. The Jews had a form of God's making, and ours is indited by the Spirit, with which St. Paul uses to close his Epistles. *Dean Comber.*

This form of blessing seems to have been delivered to the Church, that it might be used instead of the Jewish form, with which the priest under the law dismissed the

congregation. The reason of its being changed was undoubtedly owing to the new revelation made of the three Persons in the Godhead. For otherwise the Jews both worshipped and blessed, in the name of the same God as the Christians; only their devotions had respect chiefly to the Unity of the Godhead, whereas ours comprehend also the Trinity of Persons. *Wheatly.*

The words are somewhat altered from what they are in the text whence they are taken. For, 1. the minister makes use of the term "us," instead of "you," including himself with the people: 2. the word "evermore" is added. By the former of these alterations the Church has turned this form into a prayer, rather than a blessing. It is also expressly called a "prayer" in the rubrick before the prayer for the king. The minister therefore is to kneel whilst he utters it, as he does in using the other prayers: and the congregation are to speak it mentally to God, to whom it is addressed. *Dr. Bennet, Dr. Bisse.*

The former things being done, it only remains, that on departing from God's more immediate presence in his church, we intreat for ourselves and one another, as we do accordingly in the words of Scripture, the continual presence of the holy Trinity, wherever we go: that "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," which will secure to us "the love of God" the Father, and "the fellowship," that is, the communication of the needful warnings and assistances, "of the Holy Ghost." *Abp. Secker.*

Nor are these only desired for us, but pronounced over us, and conveyed to us by the Ambassador of heaven, from whose mouth when we have received this blessing, let us bow our heads, and return home in peace, saying, "Amen, Amen," and God shall make it good. *Dean Comber.*

Thus we have attempted to set before the reader the several parts or offices of the Morning or first service of our Church: which upon this imperfect view appear so rational in themselves, so exact in their proportions, and so apt in their connexions; that we may venture to affirm, that thus far our holy Mother doth "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." 1 Chron. xvi. 29. *Dr. Bisse.*

Here endeth the Order of Morning Prayer throughout the Year.

THE ORDER FOR

EVENING PRAYER,

DAILY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

¶ *At the beginning of Evening Prayer the Minister shall read with a loud voice some one or more of these Sentences of the Scriptures that follow. And then he shall say that which is written after the said Sentences.*

WHEN the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezekiel* xviii. 27.

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. *Psalm* li. 3.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. *Psalm* li. 9.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psalm* li. 17.

Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Joel* ii. 13.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us. *Daniel* ix. 9, 10.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. *Jer.* x. 24. *Psalm* vi. 1.

Repent ye; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. *St. Matth.* iii. 2.

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *St. Luke* xv. 18, 19.

Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalm* cxliii. 2.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 *St. John* i. 8, 9.

DEARLY beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly

Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me;

¶ *A general Confession to be said of the whole Congregation after the Minister, all kneeling.*

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesu our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

¶ *The Absolution, or Remission of sins, to be pronounced by the Priest alone, standing; the people still kneeling.*

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live; and hath given power, and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his holy Spirit, that those things may please him, which we do at this present; and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure, and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *Then the Minister shall kneel, and say the Lord's Prayer; the people also kneeling, and repeating it with him.*

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

¶ *Then likewise he shall say,*

O Lord, open thou our lips.

THE ORDER FOR

EVENING PRAYER,

DAILY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

¶ *At the beginning of Evening Prayer the Minister shall read with a loud voice some one or more of these Sentences of the Scriptures that follow. And then he shall say that which is written after the said Sentences.*

WHEN the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezekiel* xviii. 27.

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The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psalm* li. 17.

Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Joel* ii. 13.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us. *Daniel* ix. 9, 10.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. *Jer.* x. 24. *Psalm* vi. 1.

Repent ye; for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. *St. Matth.* iii. 2.

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *St. Luke* xv. 18, 19.

Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalm* cxliii. 2.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 *St. John* i. 8, 9.

DEARLY beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly

Answer. And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Priest. O God, make speed to save us.

Answer. O Lord, make haste to help us.

¶ *Here all standing up, the Priest shall say,*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;

Answer. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Priest. Praise ye the Lord.

Answer. The Lord's Name be praised.

¶ *Then shall be said or sung the Psalms in order as they are appointed. Then a Lesson of the Old Testament, as is appointed. And after that,* Magnificat[d] *(or the Song of the blessed Virgin* Mary*) in English, as followeth.*

Magnificat. St. Luke i.

MY soul doth magnify the Lord : and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded : the lowliness[e] of his hand-maiden.

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[d] *And after that, Magnificat*] As soon as the blessed Virgin was filled with the Holy Ghost she uttered this divine canticle, which is the very first hymn recorded in the New Testament, and may be reckoned the first-fruits of the Spirit; and therefore it hath been anciently used among the Christians, and is received at this day into the service of all the reformed churches of Holland and Germany, as well as retained in ours, where it is placed very fitly after the first lesson at evening prayer, in which are usually set forth those acts of God's gracious providence over the pious, and those prophecies and promises of a Saviour to come, for which this hymn doth praise the Lord: the blessed Virgin then experienced God's goodness to his servants, and saw the accomplishment of all his promises, and in this form she expressed her joy and gratitude; and when we hear in the lesson like examples of his mercy, and are told of those prophecies and promises which are now fulfilled in Christ's birth, we may be expected to rejoice with her in the same words. *Dean Comber.*

The hymn after the first lesson, called "Magnificat" from the word, with which it begins in the Latin, was used anciently by the Western Church; and continues to be used by the Protestants abroad. It is the song of the blessed Virgin, recorded by St. Luke, i. 46—55, on the confirmation, which she received at Elizabeth's house, of what the angel told her, that she should become the mother of our Lord, by the operation of the Holy Ghost: and it expresses most naturally the transport, which on that occasion she must feel: but, like the hymn of Zacharias, in phrases of the Old Testament, to be interpreted from the New: of which matter I have already spoken. See page 29, note *e*.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord," doth acknowledge the infinite greatness of his power and mercy: "for he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maiden;" that is, "the low estate;" for so the original signifies, and so it is expressed in our Bibles; not the humility of the mind, which the holy Virgin was too humble to ascribe to herself. "From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed:" as we do accordingly, both by repeating this hymn, and in our common speech. "For he that is mighty hath magnified me," hath raised me to great honour: "and holy is his name;" his truth, his justice, his mercy, his concern for the goodness as well as happiness of his creatures, are gloriously manifested in this wonderful dispensation. "He hath shewed" in times past, and will as certainly now, as if it were done already, "strength with his arm," supernatural power, for the erection of the kingdom of his Son: and hath often scattered, and will again, "scatter" and defeat "the proud" opposers of it, by means of those very "imaginations of their hearts," in which they exult. "The mighty" among the Jews and heathen "shall be put down from their seat, and humble and meek" Christians "exalted" in their stead. "They, that hunger and thirst after righteousness," Matt. v. 6, shall be "filled with" spiritual "good things; and the rich," that rely on the vain and false treasures of their own wisdom and merit, he will convict of being "poor and blind and naked," Rev. iii. 17, "and so send them empty away." "He hath holpen his servant Israel," all that by obeying him become his people, "as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham" the father of the faithful, "and his" true "seed;" thus "remembering his" covenanted "mercy," which shall last "for ever." This is the triumph of the holy Virgin; and every part of it should be our own likewise. For God "hath regarded our low estate," together with her's, and "magnified" us, and made us "blessed." And we should magnify and bless him continually for it. *Abp. Secker.*

[e] *For he hath regarded the lowliness*] Or low estate "of his hand-maiden." She does not here speak of her humility, or lowliness of spirit, though of that indeed she was an eminent example, but of the meanness and obscurity of her condition; admiring the goodness of God, who in his infinite wisdom "raiseth up the poor out of the dust," and "chooseth the weak things of the world, and things that are despised," that is, the meanest and lowest of his servants, to be the instruments of conveying his greatest blessings to the sons of men. Various instances of this sort are recorded in the sacred writings, but none so remarkable as this of the blessed Virgin, who was raised from poverty and disgrace, to be distinguished by the highest honour, to be "highly favoured and blessed among women." "For behold," says she, "from hence-

For behold, from henceforth : all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me : and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him : throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm : he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat : and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things : and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel : as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Or else this Psalm*[r]*; except it be on the Nineteenth Day of the Month, when it is read in the ordinary Course of the Psalms.*

Cantate Domino. Psalm xcviii.

O Sing unto the Lord a new song : for he hath done marvellous things.

With his own right hand, and with his holy arm : hath he gotten himself the victory.

The Lord declared his salvation : his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Is-

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forth all generations shall call me blessed: for he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his name." In her was to be accomplished the ancient prophecy, that "a Virgin should conceive and bear a son," Is. vii. 14. Of her was to be born the Redeemer of Israel, the Saviour of the world, the Holy One, the Mighty God, the Prince of peace. Well therefore might all after-ages "call her blessed:" well might they celebrate her memory, the fruit of whose womb was "the Author of eternal salvation:" well might they admire her, as a pattern of true meekness, and piety, and purity of manners: but farther than this we dare not go. To invoke her, as the queen of heaven; to pray to her, and worship her, as one having divine power; is the height of profaneness and impiety: a direct breach of "the first and great commandment." How must her meek and humble spirit have been offended and shocked, could she have foreseen the idolatrous adoration of the Church of Rome, who not only "call her blessed," but place her upon an equality with the blessed Lord of heaven and earth; nay, in some sense, make her superior to our Saviour, by beseeching her to "command her Son" to grant their requests! *Waldo.*

[r] *Or else this Psalm;*] Instead of the "Magnificat" made by the most excellent of the daughters of David, we sometimes use a psalm of David's own composing, out of which part of the "Magnificat" was taken, namely, Luke i. 54, "He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel:" which is the fourth verse of this psalm, and as there "the strength of God's arm" is celebrated, so is "the power of his holy arm" magnified here also, ver. 2. And indeed there is a great similitude between them, only this seems more proper when the evening first lesson mentions some great and eminent deliverance of God's people. *Dean Comber.*

In the 98th psalm, which our Prayer Book tells us may be used, and in some places frequently is, instead of the "Magnificat," we exhort one another to "sing unto the Lord a new song;" words, denoting in the book of Revelation, v. 9; xiv. 3, Gospel praises: and we foretell that "all lands" shall join in it, "with trumpets and shawms," another instrument of wind musick, which in our Bible is called a cornet: whence we may conclude, if it needed proof, that musical instruments are lawful in Christian worship. This future time of universal thanksgiving is described to be, when God shall "remember," that is, shall give evidence that he hath never forgot, "his mercy and truth towards the house of Israel," according to the flesh; and not only they, but "all the ends of the world shall see his salvation." No wonder, that even the irrational and inanimate parts of nature are called upon, by a lofty figure of speech, to celebrate that glorious day: "the sea" to "make a noise, and all that therein is; the floods" to "clap their hands, and the hills to be joyful together before the Lord:" partly for the present happiness of that period, in which possibly the lowest of God's works may share; but chiefly for the approach of the next and concluding scene of Providence, when he shall "come" finally, "with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with equity." *Abp. Secker.*

When the first lesson treats of some great and temporal deliverance granted to the peculiar people of God, we have the ninety-eighth psalm for variety; which, though made on occasion of some of David's victories, may yet be very properly applied to ourselves, who, being God's adopted children, are a "spiritual Israel," and therefore have all imaginable reason to bless God for the same, and to call upon the whole creation to join with us in thanksgiving. *Wheatly.*

rael : and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands : sing, rejoice, and give thanks.

Praise the Lord upon the harp : sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

With trumpets also and shawms : O shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.

Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is : the round world, and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord : for he cometh to judge the earth.

With righteousness shall he judge the world : and the people with equity.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then a Lesson of the New Testament, as it is appointed. And after that,* Nunc dimittis[s] *(or the Song of* Symeon*) in English, as followeth.*

Nunc dimittis. St. Luke ii. 29

LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen : thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared : before the face of all people ;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles : and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

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[s] —*after that, Nunc dimittis* &c.] After the second evening lesson out of the Epistles of the holy apostles, this hymn is most commonly used ; the author of it is supposed to be that holy doctor whom the Jews call Simeon the Just, son of the famous Rabbi Hillel, a man of eminent integrity, and one who opposed the then common opinion of the Messiah's temporal kingdom. The occasion of composing it was his meeting Christ in the temple when he came to be offered there, wherein God fulfilled his promise to him, that he should not die till he had seen the Messiah ; taking Jesus therefore in his arms, inspired with joy and the Holy Ghost, he sang this "Nunc dimittis :" and though we cannot see our Saviour with our bodily eyes as he did, yet he is by the writings of the apostles daily presented to the eyes of our faith ; and if we were as much concerned for heaven, and as loose from the love of this world as old Simeon was, and as we ought to be, we might upon the view of Christ in his holy word by faith, be daily ready to sing this hymn ; which was indited by the Spirit, recorded in holy writ, and is adopted into the publick service of all Christian churches, Greek and Latin, reformed and Roman, and used to be sung in extraordinary by divers saints and martyrs a little before their death. *Dean Comber.*

This hymn, called from the Latin beginning of it "Nunc dimittis," expresses the gratitude of good old Simeon, "a just man and devout," as we read in St. Luke, ii. 25—32, "and waiting for the consolation of Israel ; to whom it was revealed, that he should not die, till he had seen the Lord's Christ." Accordingly "he came by the Spirit into the temple ; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, he took him up in his arms," (image to yourselves the scene, I beg you,) "and blessed God, and said : Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," that is, in comfort, "according to thy word ; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared" to set "before the face of all people." And the following sentence hath a strong appearance of being designed by the Holy Ghost to intimate, whether the speaker of it perceived the design or not, that, contrary to the expected and natural order of things, Christ should first "be a light to lighten the Gentiles ;" then afterwards, "the glory of God's people Israel." To perceive the fitness of Simeon's thanksgiving for our use, it needs only to be remembered, and ever should in repeating it, that we also "have seen the Lord's salvation." For though we have not yet beheld our Saviour with our bodily eyes ; to that of faith he is exhibited continually in the Gospel history and sacraments ; we may meet him in his church ; we may converse with him in our private meditations. And this we should think happiness enough for us here, whatever else we want or suffer ; and be always prepared, and always willing, to "bless God," and "depart in peace." *Abp. Secker.*

This hymn comes very properly after the second lesson, which is always taken out of the New Testament, wherein is contained and delivered to us that Gospel, the enjoyment and participation of which is the ground and foundation of the whole hymn. It should be added, that this hymn is addressed to God : and since it may be used as the personal address of every devout Christian, no one should repeat it after a careless manner ; but consider to whom it is repeated, and utter the whole after a suitable manner. *Dr. Bennet.*

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Or else this Psalm*[h] *; except it be on the Twelfth Day of the Month.*

Deus misereatur. Psalm lxvii.

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us : and shew us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us :

That thy way may be known upon earth : thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God : yea, let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations rejoice and be glad : for thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.

Let the people praise thee, O God : yea, let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth bring forth her increase : and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing.

God shall bless us : and all the ends of the world shall fear him.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then shall be said or sung the Apostles' Creed by the Minister and the people, standing:*

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell ; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; The holy Catholick Church ; The Communion of Saints ; The Forgiveness of sins ; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

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[h] *Or else this Psalm ;*] The parallel to the former evangelical hymn is this psalm of David, who prayed for that "saving health," which old Simeon rejoiced to see, Ps. lxvii. 2 ; Luke ii. 30 ; and both of them praised God upon the foresight they had, that it would be "made known" to us, and to all people, as it is this day by the voices of the apostles. Since David indited this psalm for a form of prayer, for the sending of this salvation, and of praises to God, to be used by those who should see it accomplished, it cannot but be very suitable for our use, after we have heard out of the Epistles, how this salvation appeared to us, and to all men. *Dean Comber.*

This psalm is a prophetick prayer, that through "the light of God's countenance," his gracious illumination, "the way" of his providence and man's duty to him "may be known upon earth, his saving health," the means by which he heals and saves men's souls, "to all nations :" who are invited to "rejoice and be glad," because "he shall judge the folk righteously," shall govern and reward the people of the world, (for so the word, "folk," signifies, and was not a low expression formerly,) by the equitable and merciful rules of Christianity. For "then," on our doing this, "the earth shall bring forth her increase" more plentifully ; "and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing," temporal and spiritual : for "godliness hath promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8. *Abp. Secker.*

This is one of the psalms that were introduced in King Edward's second Liturgy. *Wheatly.*

This psalm is sometimes called "Deus misereatur," because in the Latin version it begins with these words. And it is very properly used after the second lesson, which is always taken out of the New Testament ; because therein we may conveniently express our desires of the farther propagation of the Gospel. This psalm is also a prayer to God, and therefore it must not be barely repeated, but addressed to our Maker in the most solemn manner. *Dr. Bennet.*

¶ *And after that, these Prayers following, all devoutly kneeling; the Minister first pronouncing with a loud voice,*

The Lord be with you.
Answer. And with thy spirit.
Minister. Let us pray.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

¶ *Then the Minister, Clerks, and people, shall say the Lord's Prayer with a loud voice.*

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ *Then the Priest standing up shall say,*

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us;
Answer. And grant us thy salvation.
Priest. O Lord, save the King.
Answer. And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.
Priest. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness.
Answer. And make thy chosen people joyful.
Priest. O Lord, save thy people.
Answer. And bless thine inheritance.
Priest. Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Answer. Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.
Priest. O God, make clean our hearts within us.
Answer. And take not thy holy Spirit from us.

¶ *Then shall follow three Collects; the first of the Day; the second for Peace; the third for Aid*[i] *against all Perils, as hereafter followeth: which two last Collects shall be daily said at Evening Prayer without alteration.*

The second Collect at Evening Prayer[k].

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

Phil. ii. 13. Prov. xvi. 1. John xiv. 27. Phil. iv. 7. Luke i. 68, 71, 74, 75.

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[i] —*the second for Peace; the third for Aid* &c.] Though the words of these Collects be different from those of the second and third Collects for morning prayer, yet the subject is the same: only the former are suited to the morning and these to the evening. They are of ancient use in the Western Church. *Dean Comber.*

[k] *The second Collect at Evening Prayer.*] Peace is so desirable a blessing, we cannot ask it too often; and since there are two kinds of peace, external and internal peace, we beg outward peace in the morning to secure us against the troubles of the world, in which the business of the day engageth us; and inward peace in the evening to comfort and quiet our minds when we are to take our rest. *Dean Comber.*

The former of the two Collects, peculiar to evening prayers, is taken from a Latin form, at least 1100 years old. It begs for the greatest of blessings here below, that joyful peace of mind, which our Saviour promised his disciples: "Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you," John xiv. 27. And since it cannot be obtained, but by "holy desires, good" and prudent "counsels" for the execution of them, "and just actions," done in consequence of both; so we petition him, "from whom all" these "proceed," to grant it us by means of them; that "our hearts being set" by his grace "to keep his commandments," and our ways "defended" by his providence "from the fear of our enemies," we may find "the work of righteousness, peace; and its effect, quietness and assurance for ever," Is. xxxii. 17. *Abp. Secker.*

The third Collect, for Aid against all Perils[1].

2 Sam. xxii. 29. Psal. xviii. 28.

Ps. lxxxiv. 12. Old Tr. cxxi. 3, 4.

LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

¶ *In Quires and Places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem.*

A Prayer for the King's Majesty.

O Lord our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lord, King *GEORGE;* and so replenish him with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that he may alway incline to thy will, and walk in thy way: Endue him plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant him in health and wealth long to live; strengthen him that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies; and finally, after this life, he may attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Royal Family.

ALMIGHTY God, the fountain of all goodness, we humbly beseech thee to bless their Royal Highnesses *George* Prince of *Wales*, the Princess of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family: Endue them with thy holy Spirit; enrich them with thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Clergy and people.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels; Send down upon our Bishops, and Curates, and all Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

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[1] *The third Collect, for Aid against all Perils.*] This is peculiar to and proper for the evening. We are always indeed environed with danger; but none are more dismal, sudden, and unavoidable, than those of the night, when darkness adds to the terror, and sleep deprives us of all possibility of foresight or defence; so that he must be an atheist, and worse than heathen, who doth not then by a special prayer commit himself to God's providence, the knowledge of which doth enlighten our minds, and makes us full of inward peace and comfort when we are in the darkest shades of night; therefore we pray with David, "Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord," Psal. xviii. 28. Light signifies, in Scripture, knowledge and comfort, and under this metaphor we pray for both, namely, that our understandings may be enlightened with the knowledge of his providence, and our hearts cheered with the assurance of his protection. *Dean Comber.*

This latter Collect, taken in part from an office of the Greek Church, prays more particularly for the safety of the ensuing night: that God's power may shine upon us, and "lighten our darkness;" that is, protect us, while we are unable to help ourselves, or even to know our danger. The same phrase is twice used in the book of Psalms. "Unto the godly there ariseth up light in darkness," Ps. cxii. 4. And again, "The Lord shall make my darkness to be light," Ps. xviii. 28. *Abp. Secker.* This Collect is particularly seasonable at night: for, being then in danger of the terrors of darkness, we by this form commend ourselves into the hands of that God, who "neither slumbers nor sleeps, and with whom darkness and light are both alike." Ps. cxxi. 3; cxxxix. 12. *Wheatly.*

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

2 *Cor.* xiii.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Here endeth the Order of Evening Prayer throughout the Year.

¶ *Upon these Feasts;* Christmas-day[m], *the* Epiphany, *Saint* Matthias, Easter-day, Ascension-day, Whitsunday, *Saint* John Baptist, *Saint* James, *Saint* Bartholomew, *Saint* Matthew, *Saint* Simon *and Saint* Jude, *Saint* Andrew, *and upon* Trinity-Sunday, *shall be sung or said at Morning Prayer, instead of the Apostles' Creed, this Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called*[n] *The Creed of Saint* Athanasius, *by the Minister and people standing.*

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[m] *Upon these Feasts; Christmas-day,* &c.] The Creed, commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius, is appointed to be said upon the days named in the rubrick, for these reasons: partly, because those days, many of them, are most proper for this confession of the faith, which of all others is the most express concerning the Trinity, because the matter of them much concerns the manifestation of the Trinity, as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter-day, Ascension-day, Whitsunday, Trinity-Sunday, and St. John Baptist's day, at the highest of whose acts, the baptizing of our Lord, was made a kind of sensible manifestation of the Trinity; partly, that so it might be said once a month at least, and therefore on St. James, and St. Bartholomew's days; and withal at convenient distance from each time, and therefore on St. Matthew, Matthias, Simon and Jude, and St. Andrew's. *Bp. Sparrow.*

[n]*—this Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called,* &c.] The doctrines of Arius, which were first proposed at Alexandria, found a native of the same city to oppose them, and this was Athanasius. The integrity of Athanasius, his courage in opposition, his fortitude under persecution, his constancy, and his purity of life, have extorted praises from those who contemn his principles, and ridicule his doctrines.

At the Council of Nice, he was a deacon attending on the patriarch of Alexandria, and the great maintainer of the catholick doctrine against the novelties of Arius; he soon after was elected patriarch of Alexandria himself; and passed the remainder of his life in a succession of expulsions and restorations, according to the prevailing opinions of the different emperors at Constantinople; and in every variety of fortune continued steady in his principles, and unshaken in his constancy.

His writings are come down to our times, and in them we find all the doctrines, and most of the identical expressions, which are now in the Creed that bears his name; but the Creed itself is generally allowed by the learned, not to be of his composition.

The Creed, as it now stands in our Liturgy, is supposed to have been framed from the writings of Athanasius; to have been acknowledged by the Western church in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, as early as the sixth century; and to have been received into the Liturgy in the eighth. The general testimony of the learned supposes Vigilius, an African bishop in the sixth century, to be the author; but Dr. Waterland, a divine in our own church of great erudition, after proving that the Creed itself is mentioned before the sixth century, offers an opinion of his own, that it was composed in France, as early as the year 450, by Hilary bishop of Arles. It was not however admitted into the offices of the Roman Church, at the earliest, till the year 930; in which it has continued ever since, and was received into our Liturgy at the time of the Reformation.

I mention these particulars, in order to shew, that a Creed, which is 1300 years old, and which has been generally received into the Church for 900 years, ought not to be treated lightly, or irreverently, as has been the case in our own country of late; or to be neglected, without considering its merit. *Dean Vincent.*

The design of the author, whoever he was, in compiling it, was to furnish the Church with a plain and clear account of the grand doctrines of the ever-blessed Trinity, and the incarnation of Christ; in opposition to the gross errors and heresies, which had been maintained and propagated, with great zeal and industry, by the enemies of the true faith. For, as the apostles had long before foretold, "false teachers crept" into the church, and "privily brought in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, even the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. ii. 1, and Jude 4. As these spread their poison, it became necessary to provide an antidote; for which purpose it was wisely ordered that creeds or summaries of the Christian faith, should be drawn up, and published for general use, to guard and defend the Articles of Religion against the arts and malice of the enemy, who lay in wait to deceive, and employed every stratagem to undermine them. And, to oppose these hereticks the more effectually, it was found expedient to be more full and particular in stating and explaining the doctrines they attacked, than had been usual or necessary in the earlier and purer ages of Christianity. Hence creeds became more numerous and enlarged, and some terms were introduced not perhaps strictly scriptural, in order to illustrate the doctrines of Scripture, and to obviate the false glosses and perverse interpretations of hereticks. Of these creeds, none has been more generally, and deservedly received and esteemed, than that which bears the title of St. Athanasius's; which our Church has adopted into her Liturgy, as a standard of the true faith, which all her members may have recourse to, and which they are all directed publickly to repeat on particular festivals: an injunction, which surely we ought to comply with; since it is an acknowledgment and declaration of our holding fast that faith, into which we were baptized. *Waldo.*

As to the matter of it, it doth very fully and particularly condemn all the heresies that were of old in the time of this great bulwark of the catholick faith; forbidding us to confound the Persons of the Trinity with Sabellius, or to divide the substance with Arius and Eunomius: it shews us against Arius and Macedonius, that both the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God: it confesses Christ to be God, of the substance of his Father, against Samosatenus and Photinus, and man of the substance of his mother, against Apollinaris; yet he is not, as Nestorius dreamed, two, but one Christ, not by confusion of substance, as Eutyches held, but by unity of Person: so that this Creed is the quintessence

Quicunque vult.

WHOSOEVER will be saved[o]: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith. Mark xvi. 16.

Which Faith except every one[p] do

of ancient orthodox divinity, and the means to extirpate all those accursed heresies, some of which our age hath seen revived, and therefore we have more need to hold and repeat this useful Creed. *Dean Comber.*

That this Creed is not Athanasius's is certainly true: but our Church receives it not upon the authority of its compiler, nor determines any thing about its age or author: but we receive it, because the truth of the doctrines contained in it "may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture," as is expressly said in our eighth Article. I may add, that the early and general reception of this Creed by Greeks and Latins, by all the Western churches, not only before but since the Reformation, must needs give it a much greater authority and weight than the name of Athanasius could do, were it ever so justly to be set to it. Athanasius has left some creeds and confessions, undoubtedly his, which yet never have obtained the esteem and reputation, that this hath done: because none of them are really of the same intrinsick value, nor capable of doing the like service in the Christian churches. The use of it is, to be a standing fence and preservative against the wiles and equivocations of most kinds of hereticks. This was well understood by Luther, when he called it, "a bulwark to the Apostles' Creed;" and it was this and the like considerations that have all along made it to be of such high esteem among all the reformed churches, from the days of their great leader. *Dr. Waterland.*

The doctrine of the Trinity, as it is here proposed, has been the doctrine of the Gospel; the doctrine of the primitive church; the doctrine of almost every thing that can be called a church in all ages: in the Greek and Roman Church, it survived in the midst of all the corruptions that arose: upon the Reformation there was not a Protestant Church, but what received it in its fullest extent: Luther, Calvin, Beza, and all the wisest and best reformers, acknowledged the Athanasian Creed, and made it their profession of faith: the Puritans in our own country, the parent stock of all our modern dissenters, embraced it as readily as the Church of England herself: and, if many of these reject it now, despise, contemn, and deride it, they are neither true Calvinists nor Presbyterians, but shelter themselves under the general name of Independents, among whom it is said at present that every man's private opinion is his church.

I do not know that this is fact, nor do I wish to deal in misrepresentation; but I have no scruple to say that "Scripture is not of private interpretation;" that whenever we go contrary to a stream, which has run in one channel for seventeen centuries, we ought to doubt our own opinions, and at least treat the general and concurring testimony of mankind with respect; that the reason of individuals is not true reason, but opinion; and that the standard of true reason is the well-weighed decision of learned and good men, brought to a centre, and comprehending all the wisdom that their united abilities could collect.

If therefore any one has his doubts on the intricacies of this question, let him first search the Scriptures, and settle his principles from thence; if he afterwards wishes to pursue his researches, let him not recur to the crude and hasty publications of the present day, in which assertions are rashly made without foundation in Scripture, antiquity, or the principles of any church; but to those learned writers who managed this controversy fifty years ago in our own country; or, if he has learning and leisure sufficient, to the primitive fathers themselves. *Dean Vincent.*

Many have argued against the use of this Creed; and some, with strange vehemence: partly from the doctrines, which it teaches; but chiefly from the condemnation, which it pronounces on all, who disbelieve them. Now the doctrines are undeniably the same with those, that are contained in the Articles of our Church, in the beginning of our Litany, in the conclusions of many of our Collects, in the Nicene Creed, and, as we conceive, in that of the Apostles, in the Doxology, in the form of Baptism, in numerous passages of both Testaments; only here they are somewhat more distinctly set forth, to prevent equivocations. Any one, who examines into the matter, will easily see it to be so. Accordingly our dissenting brethren, after they had long objected to other parts of our Liturgy, consented readily to subscribe to this Creed; the Articles of which are the common faith of the catholick Church, or, by immediate consequence, deducible from it; and little or nothing more. There are indeed several things in them, beyond our comprehension, as to the manner; but the Scripture hath the same. There are expressions, which may seem liable to exception; but it must be for want of understanding them, or admitting fair interpretations of them. The assertion that "there is one Father, not three Fathers," and so on, may appear to the ignorant, needless and trifling: but was levelled against heresies, then in being, which took away all distinction between the three Persons. That "none is before or after other" means, (as the following words, "but the whole three Persons are coeternal" prove,) that none is so in point of time, not that none is so in the order of our conceptions; for the Scripture directs us to consider the Father, as first. That "none is greater or less than another" is reconciled to our Saviour's assertion, "The Father is greater than I," (John xiv. 28.) by what follows in the Creed, "Equal as touching his Godhead, inferior, as touching his manhood." That he is "one, altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by Unity of Person" means, (for so the next words explain it) that as each of us is one man, not at all by blending the soul and body into one substance, for they are still distinct, but "altogether," by a mysterious union of the two; so he is one Christ, not at all by blending the divine and human nature into one substance, but "altogether," intirely and solely, by an union of them, yet more mysterious than the former is.

The condemnation, contained in two or three clauses of this Creed, belongs, (as the most zealous defenders of our faith in the holy Trinity agree, and as every one, who reads it considerately, will soon perceive) not to all, who cannot understand, or cannot approve, every ex-

keep whole and undefiled : without doubt he shall perish everlastingly [q].

And the Catholick Faith is this : That we worship one God in Trinity [r], and Trinity in Unity ; Matthew xxviii. 19. John x. 30. 1 John v. 7.

pression in it; but only to such as deny "the Trinity in Unity," or three Persons, who are one God. "This" alone is said to be "the catholick faith." The words, that follow after, "for there is one Person of the Father," and so on, are designed only to set this forth more particularly. And the conclusion from the whole is, not that "in all things," which are "aforesaid," by the use of every term above mentioned, but "in all things, AS IS aforesaid; the Unity in Trinity is to be worshipped:" meaning, that as at first it was said, that in all acts of faith we are to believe in each Person, so here it is added, that in all acts of worship we are to adore each: never considering one, even while addressed distinctly, as separated or separable from the other two. Now this Trinity in Unity we apprehend to have been, ever since it was fully received, a fundamental article of the Christian faith. And yet those, who believe not even so much, the Creed no otherwise teaches "cannot be saved," or "shall without doubt perish," than as our Saviour teaches concerning the whole of the Gospel: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he, that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. Our condemnation is no more hard and uncharitable, than his. And neither is so: because both are to be interpreted with due exceptions and abatements. Suppose a collection of Christian duties had been drawn up: and it had been said, in the beginning or at the end of it, "This is the catholick" practice, "which except a man" observe "faithfully, he cannot be saved:" would not every one understand, that allowance must be made for such things, as a man through involuntary ignorance mistook, or through mere infirmity failed in, or was truly sorry for, as far as he knew he had cause? Why then are not the same allowances to be understood in speaking of doctrines? For when the Creed says, that "whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick faith;" it doth not mean, that true faith is more "necessary" than right practice; but that naturally it precedes it, and is to be first learnt in order to it. The intention therefore of the Creed, as well as of our Lord in the Gospel, is only to say, that whoever rejects the doctrine of it, from presumptuous self-opinion, or wilful negligence; and doth not afterwards repent of these faults: particularly, if he is made sensible of them; or if not, at least in general, amongst his unknown sins; the case of such a one is desperate. But if want of information, weakness of apprehension, or even excusable wrongness of disposition, should make him doubt or disbelieve any or the main part of this Creed; nay, which is vastly a worse case, the whole revelation of Christianity; though we pass judgment on his errors without reserve; and, in general, on all who maintain them; yet personally and singly we presume not to judge of his condition in the next world. "To his own Master he standeth or falleth." Rom. xiv. 4. *Abp. Secker.*

It is not the province of a Creed to discuss the tenets, which it delivers, or to investigate the formal nature and sin of heresy; but they must have paid little attention to Scripture, who are not aware, that those, who thus subject themselves to the severity of divine punishment, perish, not simply because they have abandoned the truth, but because they have abandoned the love of truth, and have pleasure in unrighteousness. Their condemnation is, that "light is come into the world; and men loved darkness rather than light." John iii. 19.

No one, I presume, will be disposed to contend against the validity and equity of the argument, laying aside the authority, upon which it rests. The damnatory clauses therefore of a Creed, applied to those who pervert or corrupt its doctrines, are founded equally on the grounds of reason, and the authority of Scripture.

But the use of them so applied is not barely justifiable. Both prudence and a charitable regard to the offenders themselves, as well as to those who may be misled by their example, renders it a duty incumbent upon every Christian church, to hold up this most awful consideration, that, as the highest degrees of happiness assigned to our nature are the rewards of a Christian faith in a good conscience; so does the greatest degree of judicial misery, Matt. xxiii. 14, await those, who shall purposely poison these waters of salvation; and thus frustrate, so far as they are enabled, the salutary ends of the Gospel with respect to others.

With regard to those too who probably might be affected by the popular influence of novel propositions, it was surely but consistent with that pious zeal for the happiness of others, which is the distinguishing mark of Christian morality, to apprise them; that, as the very end of their religion, the salvation of their souls, could be obtained only by the means, which that religion prescribes, a faith in its genuine doctrines was as indispensable as obedience to its precepts; and that whosoever will, therefore, in a Christian sense of the word, be saved, must before all things hold the catholick or primitive and unaltered faith; for as there is no other name under heaven, by which men can be saved, that is, by covenant secure life and immortality; because there is but one Mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus; so there is no other Gospel, nor any other doctrines deducible from the Gospel which we possess, that are not consistent with those taught in the primitive or catholick Church. There is therefore a necessity, if we would be saved as Christians, to maintain whole and inviolate, so far as in us lies, the primitive or catholick faith. *Bp. Cleaver.*

[q] *Whosoever will be saved*, &c.] The meaning of this term in its primary signification, and as it is applied to common subjects in common discourse, means a preservation from threatening perils, or from threatened punishments: but in an evangelical sense, and as it occurs in the New Testament, it includes much more. It means the whole Christian scheme of redemption and justification by the Son of God, with all the glorious privileges and promises contained in that scheme. It means not merely a deliverance from danger or from vengeance, but a federal right to positive happiness purchased by the merits, and declared to mankind by the Gospel, of Christ Jesus our Lord. St. Paul calls it, "the obtaining of the salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory,"

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the Substance[t].

For there is one Person: of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father,

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[t] Tim. i. 11. "Whosoever" then, says the Creed, "will" thus "be saved," will be desiring to secure the glorious promises of the Gospel, must pursue it upon the terms, which that Gospel proposes: and particularly, must embrace the doctrines which it reveals. "Above all things," or in the first place, as the foundation, on which he must hereafter build a holy practice, and a continued title to pardon for past deviations from it, "it is necessary that he hold the catholick" or universal "faith," that faith which was "once delivered to the saints," and which is to be delivered unto them to the end of the world. *Archdeacon Daniel.*

[u] *Which faith except every one &c.*] "Which faith," that is "the catholick faith," before spoken of, which is another name for the true and right faith as taught in Scripture, called catholick, or universal, as being held by the universal Church of Christ, against which "the gates of hell" shall never prevail. The meaning then is, that every one is obliged, under pain of damnation, to preserve, as far as in him lies, the true and right faith, in opposition to those that endeavour to corrupt it either by taking from it, or adding to it. That men shall perish eternally for unbelief, for rejecting the faith in the lump, cannot be doubted; when it is expressly said, (Mark xvi. 16.) "he that believeth not shall be damned:" and as to rejecting any particular branch or article of it, it must of consequence be a sin against the whole; against truth, and peace, and therefore damnable in its own nature, as all wilful sins are without repentance. As to the allowances to be made for invincible ignorance, prejudice, or other unavoidable infirmities; as they will be pleadable in the case of any other sin, so they may, and they will also, be pleadable in this: but it was foreign to the purpose of the Creed to take notice of it in this case particularly, when it is common to all cases of like nature, and is always supposed, and understood, though not specially mentioned. *Dr. Waterland.*

[v] *—he shall perish everlastingly.*] Shall finally forfeit his claim to the benefits of the Christian covenant: shall be for ever excluded from the only valid claim of promised mercy. And "without doubt" he, who does not embrace the truths proposed by revelation, has no title to those hopes which that revelation, and that only, offers to mankind. *Archdeacon Daniel.*

[w] *And the Catholick Faith is this, That we worship one God in Trinity, &c.*] This new manifestation of the object of our adoration is what is peculiar to the profession of our religion, and indispensably necessary to the right notion of worship as laid down in the sacred writings. The belief of a God, of a Providence, of duty owing in this life, of an account to be given of it in the next, is common to all that are in any degree reasonable creatures, and pretend to what is called natural religion. But the worship of the holy Trinity is appropriated to Christian believers; is that which Mahometans, Jews, and Pagans ridicule and blaspheme; but which the eternal Son of God came down from heaven to reveal to and to establish in his church upon earth. This requiring of worship to the sacred [illegible] cuts off all pretence of its being a speculative or [illegible] resting doctrine. This made it practical in the highest degree, and made the practice instructive to the understanding, as well as expressive of the devotion of the heart. It implied an acknowledgment of the real divinity of each, as nothing but that truth could justify this practice; and, that truth being admitted, this duty necessarily arose from it.

It was prescribed indeed, not only by precept, but by the actual exercise of it: and the baptismal institution was at once an injunction of this duty, and an eminent instance of the discharge of it. The solemn dedication of all disciples to the service of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," in the authoritative method of their first admission into the covenant of salvation, was the highest act of worship: and while it fulfilled a present performance of it, bound to the future perpetual exercise of it. That we "worship one God in Trinity," is what we have done already, and what we then professed ourselves obliged for ever to do hereafter. *Archdeacon Daniel.*

The doctrine of the Trinity is doubtless the first and fundamental article of our faith: and for a Christian to deny it, is the greatest contradiction that can be. For to such we may well apply the words of St. Paul, "unto what then were ye baptized?" The form of baptism, as prescribed by our Saviour himself, is a plain acknowledgment of the doctrine of the Trinity; that is, of three divine Persons, distinguished by the titles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, constituting one divine Being or nature, which we call God. To be baptized into the name of these three, is to acknowledge their divine power and dominion over us, and to dedicate ourselves to them, as the objects of our faith, hope, and worship. Agreeably hereto, we are told, that "the catholick faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity;" that is, as distinguished by three Persons: and "Trinity in Unity;" that is, three Persons united in one God; the word "Trinity" signifying nothing more than "Three:" so that to object to the use of this word, because it is not found in Scripture, is most absurd. It is the doctrine, not the word, we contend for; and if three divine Persons, or agents, are mentioned as they are throughout the Bible, and at the same time we are told that there is but one God, we cannot, I think, express this doctrine more properly than by the words Trinity and Unity. As to the proofs of this great article of our faith, they are so numerous, and so clear and obvious to every impartial and unprejudiced reader of the Bible, that I shall not recite them. The argument drawn from our baptism is strong and conclusive; and the more it is weighed and considered, the more convincing it will appear. Besides, the names, attributes, and acts of the Deity are so often ascribed to the Son and Holy Spirit throughout both the Old and New Testaments, particularly in the latter, as to leave us no doubt of the divinity of their nature; since God, who has declared that he "will not give his glory to another," would never have thus dignified the highest of created beings. *Waldo.*

[x] *Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.*] Here would be no need of these particular cautions, or critical terms, in relation to this point, had

John v. 17, 18. Phil. ii. 5, 6. Heb. i. 8. Acts v. 3, 4. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one : the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son : and such is the Holy Ghost.

Col. i. 16, 17. 1 Tim. i. 17. John i. 1, 2, 3. 1 John i. 2. v. 20. Job xxxiii. 4.

The Father uncreate, the Son un-

Gen. i. 2. Heb. ix. 14. Ps. cxxxix. 7.

men been content with the plain primitive faith in its native simplicity. But as there have been a set of men, called Sabellians, who have erroneously taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all one Person, who was incarnate, and suffered, and rose again, making the Father (and Holy Ghost) to have suffered as well as the Son, (from thence called Patripassians) hence it becomes necessary to caution every pious Christian against "confounding" the Persons, as those men have done. And as there have been others, particularly the Arians, who have pretended very falsely, that the three Persons are three Substances, and of different kinds, divided from each other, one being before the other, existing when the other two were not, as also being present, where the other two are not present; these false and dangerous tenets having been spread abroad, it is become necessary to give a caution against "dividing the Substance," as these have done, very much to the detriment of sobriety and truth. *Dr. Waterland.*

If it be said that Person is not a Scripture word, as applied on this occasion, it would be sufficient to say, that it is a word, that best sets forth the sense of Scripture, so as not to confound the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with each other, but to keep up the distinction between them without dividing the Substance. But, in reality, we have the authority of Scripture for using this very term in speaking of the distinction between the sacred Three. The Son of God is said by St. Paul to be "the express image of his Father's person," Heb. i. 3. The same apostle elsewhere says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv. 6. Our translators have injured the sense of this text, by rendering it "in the face of Jesus Christ," because the original word might in itself bear that meaning: but the context shews that it cannot bear it in that place; and the same translators have rightly rendered the same word in a passage very little before it, "if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave any thing, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ," 2 Cor. ii. 10. Thus both the Greek words, (ὑπόςασις and πρόσωπον) signifying a Person, are in the New Testament applied to the Son of God as distinct from the Father; and the Church had therefore even Scriptural authority for using this expression, and speaking of the error of "confounding the Persons." *Archdeacon Dodwell.*

'*For there is one Person* &c.] The Creed having thus far declared what "is the catholick faith," and "set forth in order a declaration of those things, which are most surely believed among us," proceeds now to the proof of it, and introduces, under particular heads, a demonstration of the general truth of a "Trinity in Unity." In this respect it differs, not in substance, but in form, from other creeds; for whilst they teach, assert, and acknowledge the genuine doctrines of Christianity, they do not use arguments, but leave men to the perusal of their Bible for the evidence of those truths, and under-take no more than to recapitulate a summary of the principal contents of it. Whereas this Creed goes on in the argumentative method to shew, why we ought not, in our exposition or belief of this article, either to "confound the Persons, or to divide the Substance." *Archdeacon Dodwell.*

Before the proper divinity of Christ was questioned by Arius, few words and little explanation were necessary; before the Persons of the Godhead were confounded by Sabellius, no affirmation to the contrary was demanded. But, when these men began to judge the articles of faith by reason; when they applied reason to combat plain and positive assertions in the word of God; they demanded satisfaction upon points that were not the object of reason, but of faith; and when no satisfaction could be given them, they levelled Scripture to their reason, instead of building their faith on Scripture; they interpreted by a figure what is literal, they distorted what was plain.

If reason is the noblest gift of God, still let us not raise it to an equality with divine wisdom; if we ask what is truth, and search after truth, let us restrain ourselves within the bounds that God has fixed to reason. Let the wisest then try their reason in contemplating God himself, his existence, omnipotence, prescience, eternity, or any other attribute: and if their reason is not checked in its flight; if truth, demonstrative truth, which they require, is to be found; if they are not stopped short with mystery, that word which they deride, that idea which they abhor; let them boast of a reason which other men have not, and which is peculiar to themselves.

If God has revealed himself by reason to the heart of the heathen, if God has revealed himself to the Hebrew in the Old Testament, I maintain that there is still inexplicable mystery in both revelations; and if there are additional mysteries in the Christian revelation, so be it; we are content to embrace these mysteries as articles of faith, to bow down our reason and our opinions before the word of God, to believe that he *will* not, he *cannot* deceive us, and that, if we are mistaken in interpreting his word, he will pardon our infirmity, and reward us for our intention, if not for our knowledge.

We confess then the Trinity in Unity to be a mystery; but if Christ is called God in Scripture, and the Holy Ghost God, and yet we read, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one God," what remains for us but to adore in silent humility, what we cannot comprehend; and allow with the Athanasian Creed, that, though every Person by himself is Lord and God, yet there are not three Gods or three Lords, but one God and one Lord.

The same reasoning applies to all those repetitions in the Creed, which some assert offend their ears, and distract their minds; for, if Christ is God and the Holy Ghost God, they must be uncreate, incomprehensible, and eternal; these are all attributes of the Deity, and each Person severally must partake of these attributes, if he partakes of the Godhead.

create : and the Holy Ghost uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible*, the Son incomprehensible : and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal : and the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals : but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated : but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

Rev. i. 8. Job xxxiii. 4. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty : and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighties : but one Almighty.

John i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Acts xx. 28. v. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 19. So the Father is God, the Son is God : and the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet they are not three Gods : but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord : and the Holy Ghost Lord. Acts x. 36. Rom. x. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 47. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

And yet not three Lords : but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity : to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord ;

So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion : to say, There be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none : neither created, nor begotten. John v. 26.

The Son is of the Father alone : not made, nor created, but begotten. John i. 14, 18. iii. 16, 18. Heb. i. 5, 6, 8, 9, 11. v. 5. 1 John iv. 9.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son : neither made, nor

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The substance of the Godhead is an equal mystery. All pious men, and the catholick Church itself, would have been silent on this head if they had been permitted; but when Sabellius maintained on one hand, that the three Persons were only three names, or three operations, or three modes of expressing one God; and the Arians, on the other, taught that the Son was not of the same substance with the Father; the Church was either obliged to profess that Christ was not God, as he is styled in Scripture, or to declare with the Athanasian Creed, that we neither confounded the Persons, as the Sabellians did, nor divided the Unity as the Arians did. For, if Christ is not of the same substance with the Father, then is he not perfect God; then two different substances make two different Gods, a God superior, and a God inferior; our idea of God is confounded; we see no reason why he is called God in Scripture, or what we are to understand by the title.

It is agreeable to the same deduction, that we are compelled to acknowledge that in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another, but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal. The title of God given to the second and third Person implies this; for though we understand that the Father is first in order, as unoriginate, that is, derived from none; the Son second, as begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost third, as proceeding from both; though we confess that the Father is supreme in office, and that the Son and Holy Ghost condescend to inferior offices; still in duration, dignity, and other attributes peculiar to the Deity, they are co-equal.

Would to God, that questions of this sort had never been agitated, or professions of this kind never been required of us! Reason and language fail us, while we mention these subjects; and, while we are compelled to renounce the doctrines of our adversaries, we tremble at the ground we stand on ourselves.

I speak this not with a spirit of doubt, but in all humility of soul; for if we say with St. John, "the Word was God," or with St. Paul, that, "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God," we cannot disallow the deduction of the Creed, without explaining away the meaning of the texts; and if we depart from the plain and literal sense of the Scripture, we may explain away our whole religion.

The conclusion of all these several assertions in the Creed is, that the Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. Worship follows the idea of God; and if we are told on one hand that the worshipping of angels is a sin, which St. Paul expressly declares; and on the other that the angels are commanded to worship the Son; and that the saints in heaven do worship him; what doubt can we have of worshipping the three Persons in the Godhead, or the Godhead in the three Persons? *Dean Vincent.*

*—*incomprehensible,*] The English version here varies from the original. In the Latin, which was the language in which this Creed was first penned, it stands thus; "the Father immense, the Son immense, and the Holy Ghost immense." When this translation was first made in our native tongue, the word "incomprehensible" was not confined to the sense it now bears, as inconceivable, or beyond or above our understanding; but it then meant not comprehended within any limits, and thus answered to the original expression and notion of immensity. *Archdeacon Dodwell.*

created, nor begotten, but proceed-
John xv. 26. ing.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity[x], and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity[y].

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[x] *So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity*, &c.] The reference, here made to what had been said before, belongs to the beginning of the Creed, where it had been said almost in the very same words, "The Catholick faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity." It was there laid down as a positive assertion, as a declaration of the professed doctrine of the Church. It is here resumed as an inference from all the particulars, that had since been taught and proved from Scripture and reason. Had that doctrine and worship been acquiesced in, as plainly drawn from the baptismal form, that short sentence had in this respect been creed sufficient. But when men, in attempting to explain the Trinity, advanced, or seemed to advance, notions repugnant to the divine Unity; or when, in adhering to that most fundamental point, they destroyed the distinctions of the sacred Three, which had been established in words as plain as the Scripture could use, then such errors were to be renounced in form; and it was judged necessary, that the members of the Church should in such instances be directed to declare, what they did not believe, as well as what they did believe. Whatever notion "confounded the Persons," or "divided the Substance," was equally to be rejected, and every sentence which is inserted in this Creed, has a view to some error or heresy on the one side or the other.

However, it was particularly necessary to prove the several attributes of each Person, as here specified, the uncreatedness, the incomprehensibility, or infinity, the eternity, the divinity, the lordship, or supreme dominion, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in order to intitle them to worship from us, and to justify us in the joint exercise of it. St. Paul severely censures those ignorant idolaters, who "when they knew not God, did service unto them, which by nature are no gods." (Gal. iv. 8.) And God himself by his prophet declares adoration to be unalienably his sole prerogative. "I am the Lord; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." Isa. xlii. 8. Yet it is the declared design of the Father himself, that "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father:" John v. 23. St. Paul adds expressly, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6. And we find this injunction obeyed and exemplified by the whole host of heaven, Rev. v. 12, 13. Every benediction likewise "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost:" every oath and appeal made to Chrisf, and to "conscience as bearing witness in the Holy Ghost," is a solemn act of adoration, intended as an authoritative pattern. This part of the Creed concludes with the repetition of the definitive sentence at the beginning of it. *Archdeacon Dodwell.*

[y] *He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.*] He, that will secure a title to the promised salvation through Christ, must embrace the doctrines that Christ has revealed, and obey the rules that Christ has established. He must profess the belief and adore the Persons, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; for, without this, he cannot so much as be admitted a member of the Church. He must "with his heart believe this unto justification, and with his mouth make confession thereof unto salvation," as St. Paul speaks, Rom. x. 10. The doctrine of the Trinity, if true, must be a truth of great importance, for it is connected with every article of our religion, whether more or less speculative or practical. The acknowledgment or the rejection of it alters the very notion of our justification and salvation, and either represents it as a mystery of mercy in the conjunction of infinite justice, undeviating righteousness, and unlimited goodness, or as the easy grant of a tender Being, who has more regard to the happiness than to the holiness of his creatures.

On this account so much stress is laid on the necessity of embracing this article, and it is said, that "he must thus think of the Trinity, who would be saved." He who has such instruction offered, and such evidence of it laid before him, is answerable for his neglect, if he does not admit the truth; and falls finally short of the only federal title to mercy: without our determining any thing concerning their state who never heard of Christ; or theirs, to whom the truths of the Gospel are imperfectly proposed, or unfairly represented; or theirs, who, under all advantages in these respects, have yet perhaps equal difficulties to struggle with, through personal incapacity, or unsurmountable prepossessions. "To their own Master these stand or fall." Rom. xiv. 4. We are only to apply "to the law and to the testimony," and to say, what they must believe and do to be saved, who would secure their title to salvation upon the terms prescribed in the Gospel.

Now the proofs of the general doctrine of the "Trinity in Unity" are plain, and short, and easy, open to every understanding. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are distinguished from each other by peculiar acts and offices. Yet divine names, titles, attributes, and offices, are ascribed to each of them; and the Unity of the Deity is as unquestionably established. To this general doctrine alone belong the condemnatory sentences, and not to the particulars in view in the observations following, which may safely be unknown, where the

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

In such cases it will be evident, that neither articles of faith so conceived, nor the damnatory clauses accompanying them, will, or can be intended to, apply to those, who do not apprehend them.

Still will no just presumption against the utility of such a summary, or of such clauses, attach to them, even as they respect those, who may not at present understand their design. To these persons they will be nevertheless a security for the purity of their faith, whenever that faith shall be endangered by the misrepresentation of error, or artifice; for whenever they shall be tempted to admit false explications, or plausible objections to their faith, they will then at least be as capable of admitting such explications as are true; and, without delusively trusting to the apparent but unreal decision of their own judgment in matters beyond their reach, they will, in the creeds of their church, always have the support of that authority, to which alone the unlearned ought to have recourse. A Creed of this kind may therefore be considered as a preservative against heresy, applicable as occasion shall require; and useful just so far as the danger of error shall occur.

If this Creed therefore be not in daily use, it will be desirable to remind the unlearned of such a preservative, by the repetition of it at stated times, and upon those occasions especially, when the great and leading objects of our faith are made the subjects of our meditation.

Such an use of it will have another important advantage, as it regards the unlearned: for, as it is previously made a test of the faith of their appointed teacher; so, by the stated repetition of it, it becomes a test of his perseverance in that faith; and they are thereby rendered as secure, as human provisions can render them, of the justness and consistency of his doctrinal instructions.

But to the publick at large a summary of this kind is valuable on many more accounts.

As an explicit and correct profession of the fundamental doctrines of our religion in the churches by which it is adopted, it manifests to the whole Christian world the extent and unity of that faith, which, existing from the commencement of the Gospel, has for the space of twelve or thirteen centuries been secured by the same form of words through the Latin or Western churches of Christendom. Thus again these churches present their institutes of religious faith more explicitly to the candid and mature examination of every liberal and well informed mind, who is thereby enabled to judge of the degree of Scriptural authority, upon which they rest, and of the purity of the Church, within whose pale he has been, or may wish to be, admitted.

The ministry are likewise thereby instructed more fully in the doctrines which they undertake to teach, and forewarned more in detail of the heresies which they engaged to oppose; and, by these stated repetitions, are reminded of the strict obligations, which they have taken upon themselves; of the fraud, which they impose upon the religious establishment, so long as they receive the emoluments of a station and function, whilst they refuse to discharge the duties attached to them: and of the guilt, which they contract before God, when, by neglect or opposition to these doctrines, they discountenance articles of faith, which they voluntarily and publickly have engaged to promote. *Bp. Cleaver.*

With respect to the publick reading of this Creed, which it is become the practice to omit in some places, it is desirable for the clergy to consider, how offensive this omission must be to the orthodox part of their congregation, who are thereby deprived of an opportunity of professing their faith publickly in the manner which the Church has directed. And they may be asked, whether is it more reasonable to offend those by an irregular omission; or to disgust the heterodox by reading what they are commanded? *Waldo.*

To the Sceptic, the Arian, and the Socinian, we do not expect to find such a Creed acceptable, because it was designed to restrain the fantastick and pernicious opinions started on their part upon the subjects contained in it.

But every firm and steady believer may still, and indeed ought to, hold high the value of the only Creed delivered to us from antiquity; which states that first and great principle of Christian revelation, the importance and necessity of a just faith.

Upon us, the ministers of the Church, especially, it is incumbent, as occasions offer, to explain and illustrate its design and uses to the more unlearned, as well as to obviate the crude exceptions made against its doctrines or language; to derive its due weight of authority from the venerable antiquity of its origin; and to draw an argument of its merits from the universal approbation, with which it has been received, and from the place which it now holds in the Confession, if not in the Liturgy, of every Church in Europe, papal and reformed; from no one of which could it be removed, without authorizing, on the part of that Church, a presumption, that its doctrines were erroneous.

It has now, indeed, for a long succession of ages borne so great a share in the just interpretation and support of our Christian faith, that it may well afford a doubt, how far without it this faith itself would, in the present degree of purity and correctness, be so well maintained; especially that important principle of it, which stands foremost in this Creed, and which cannot meet our observation too often. This they have well judged, who, at different times, have proposed to us to part with it, merely to gain in return the applause of a liberal and candid concession, an inducement too usually proffered in contempt, and paid without sincerity.

Concessions, indeed, in matters of less importance, have too generally a very doubtful effect; but who would be responsible for a concession of such high concern? If this Creed be really what, I trust, the preceding considerations prove it to be, an important fence to the faith of that holy Church, which Christ hath purchased with his blood; who would not tremble at the proposal of laying waste a fence, which, in any degree, hath afforded pro-

tection to what was obtained for us at so inestimable a price; and of inviting, by a voluntary surrender of our present security, renewed instances of insult, in repeated and incessant attacks, to be made upon the terms and obligations of our Christian covenant? *Bp. Cleaver.*

When this Creed was written, it was both in the East and West churches accepted as a treasure of inestimable price by as many as had not given up even the very ghost of belief: howbeit not then so expedient to be publickly used as now in the church of God. *Hooker.*

Upon the whole, it is exceeding useful and even necessary, for every church to have some such form as this, or something equivalent, open and common to all its members; that none may be led astray for want of proper caution, and previous instruction in what so nearly concerns the whole structure and fabrick of the Christian faith. As to this particular form, it has so long prevailed and has so well answered the use intended, that, all things considered, there can be no sufficient reason for changing any part of it, much less for laying the whole aside. There are several other Creeds very good ones, (though somewhat larger,) which, had they been made choice of for common use, might possibly have done as well. The Creeds I mean, (of which there is a great number) drawn up after the council of Chalcedon, and purposely contrived to obviate all the heresies that ever had infected the Christian church. But those, that dislike this Creed, would much more dislike the other; as being still more particular, and explicit, in regard to the Nestorian, Eutychian, and Monothelite heresies, and equally full and clear for the doctrine of the Trinity.

To conclude; so long as there shall be any men left to oppose the doctrines which this Creed contains, so long will it be expedient and even necessary to continue the use of it, in order to preserve the rest; and, I suppose, when we have none remaining to find fault with the doctrines, there will be none to object against the use of the Creed, or so much as wish to have it laid aside. *Dr. Waterland.*

THE LITANY.

¶ *Here followeth the LITANY*[d], *or General Supplication*[e], *to be sung or said after Morning Prayer upon* Sundays, Wednesdays, *and* Fridays[f], *and at other times when it shall be commanded*[g] *by the Ordinary*[h].

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[d] *Here followeth the Litany,*] Till the last review in 1661 the Litany was designed to be a distinct service by itself, and to be used some time after the Morning Prayer was over. *Wheatly.* And in the rubrick before the Commination it was ordered, that after Morning Prayer is done, which was then done betimes, and while it was yet morning, not put off as since till towards noon, "the people shall be called together again to the Litany by the tolling of a bell, after the accustomed manner." So that in those days the custom was to go home after Morning Prayer, and to come again to the Litany. *Bp. Cosins.*

[e] *Here followeth the Litany, or General Supplication,* &c.] The word Litany is used by the most ancient Greek writers for "an earnest supplication to the gods, made in time of adverse fortune:" and in the same sense it is used in the Christian church for "a supplication and common intercession to God, when his wrath lies upon us." Such a kind of supplication was the fifty-first Psalm, which begins with "Have mercy upon me," &c. and may be called David's Litany. Such was that Litany of God's appointing, Joel ii. 17; where, in a general assembly, the priests were to say with tears, "Spare thy people, O Lord," &c. And such was that Litany of our Saviour, Luke xxii. 44, which kneeling he often repeated with strong crying and tears, Heb. v. 7; and St. Paul reckons up "supplications" among the kinds of Christian offices, which he enjoins shall be daily used, 1 Tim. ii. 1; which supplications are generally expounded Litanies for removal of some great evil. As for the form in which they are now made, namely, in short requests by the priest, to which the people all answer, St. Chrysostom saith it is derived from the primitive age. And not only the Western, but the Eastern Church also, have ever since retained this way of praying. This was the form of the Christians' prayers in Tertullian's time, on the days of their stations, Wednesdays and Fridays, by which he tells us they removed drought. Thus in St. Cyprian's time they requested God for deliverance from enemies, for obtaining rain, and for removing or moderating his judgments. And St. Ambrose hath left a form of Litany, which bears his name, agreeing in many things with this of ours. For when miraculous gifts ceased, they began to write down divers of those primitive forms, which were the original of our modern office: and about the year 400 these Litanies began to be used in procession, the people walking barefoot, and saying them with great devotion. And Mamertus, bishop of Vienna, did collect a Litany to be so used, by which his country was delivered from dreadful calamities, in the year 460. And soon after, Sidonius, bishop of Arverne, upon the Gothick invasion, made use of the same office; and about the year 500, the Council of Orleans enjoined they should be used at one certain time of the year, in this publick way of procession: and in the next century, Gregory the Great did, out of all the Litanies extant, compose that famous sevenfold Litany, by which Rome was delivered from a grievous mortality, which hath been a pattern to all Western churches ever since; and ours comes nearer to it, than that in the present Roman missal, wherein later popes had put in the invocation of saints, which our Reformers have justly expunged. But by the way we may note, that the use of Litanies, in procession about the fields, came up but in the time of Theodosius in the East, and in the days of Mamertus of Vienna, and Honoratus of Marseilles, namely, in the year 460, in the West; and it was later councils which did enjoin the use of it in Rogation week; but the forms of earnest supplications were far more ancient and truly primitive. As for our own Litany, it is now enjoined on Wednesdays and Fridays, the two ancient fasting days of the Christians, in which they had of old more solemn prayers; and on Sundays, when there is the fullest assembly: and no church in the world hath so complete a form as the curious and comprehensive method of it will declare. *Dean Comber.*

[f] *—on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays,*] Epiphanius referreth this order to the apostles. The Jews in their synagogues observed for their special days of assembling together those, that dwelt in villages, Mondays and Thursdays besides the sabbath. The precedent of the Jews directed the Church not to do less than they did. They made choice of Mondays and Thursdays, in regard of some great calamities, that befel their nation upon those days; and that they might not be three days together, without doing some publick service to God. The Church had the like reason of Wednesdays and Fridays, whereon our Saviour was betrayed and crucified; the moral reason of once in three days, with a convenient distance from Sunday, concurring. The observance of these days for publick assemblies was universal, and the practice of the oldest times. *Bp. Cosins.*

[g] *—when it shall be commanded by the Ordinary.*] Next to the Morning and Evening service in our Prayer-Book stands the Litany, or more earnest supplication for averting God's judgments, and procuring his mercy. This earnestness, it was thought, would be best excited and expressed by the people's interposing frequently to repeat with their own mouths the solemn form of "beseeching" God to "deliver" and to "hear" them: in which however the minister is understood to join equally; as the congregation are in every particular specified by him. Such Litanies have been used in the Church at least 1400 years. And they were appointed first for Wednesdays and Fridays, these being appropriated to penitence and humiliation, and for other fasts: but not long after for Sundays also; there being then the largest congregation, and most solemn worship: and our Litany

Eph. iii. 14. Ps. li. 1. O God[i] the Father, of heaven[k]: have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Father, of heaven : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

John xx. 28. John v. 23. 1 Cor. i. 2. O God the Son[l], Redeemer of

is farther directed to be used at such other times, as the Ordinary shall think proper. Originally it was intended for a distinct service; to come after the Morning Prayer, as the rubrick of our Liturgy still directs, and before the office for the Communion, at a proper distance of time from each: of which custom a few churches preserve still, or did lately, some remains. But in the rest, convenience or inclination hath prevailed to join them all three together: excepting that in some places there is a psalm or anthem between the first and second; and between the second and third, almost every where: besides that the latter part of the Morning Prayer is, most of it, ordered to be omitted, when the Litany is said with it. But still by this close conjunction many things may appear improper repetitions; which, if the offices were separate, would not. However, as it is, they, who use extempore prayers in publick, have small right to reproach us on this head. For doth it not frequently happen, that, during one assembly of theirs, different ministers praying successively, or the same minister in several prayers, or perhaps in one only, shall fall into as many repetitions, as are in the different parts of our Liturgy, or more? But, be that as it will, to these last all persons would easily be reconciled, if an interval were placed, in their minds at least, between the services; and they would consider each, when it begins, as a new and independent one, just as if it were a fresh time of meeting together.

The Litany of our Church is not quite the same with any other: but differs very little from those of the Lutherans in Germany and Denmark. It is larger than the Greek; but shorter than the Roman, which is half filled up with the names of saints invoked: whereas we invoke, first, the three Persons of the holy Trinity, separately and jointly; then in a more particular manner our Redeemer and Mediator, "to whom all power is given in heaven and earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. *Abp. Secker.*

The posture, in which the minister is to repeat the Litany, is not prescribed in any present rubrick, except that, as it is now a part of the Morning service for the days above-mentioned, it is included in the rubrick at the end of the suffrages after the second Lord's prayer, which orders "all to kneel" in that place, after which there is no direction for "standing." And the Injunctions of King Edward and Queen Elizabeth both appoint, that "the priests, with others of the choir, shall kneel in the midst of the church, and sing or say plainly and distinctly the Litany, which is set forth in English, with all the suffrages following, to the intent the people may hear and answer, &c." As to the posture of the people, nothing needs to be said in relation to that, because, whenever the priest kneels, they are always to do the same. *Wheatly.*

If the Litany be, as certainly it is, our most fervent address to God, fit is it that it should be made in the most significant, that is, in the lowest posture of supplication. *L'Estrange.*

[h] *Ordinary.*] This word, which we have received from the civil law, means the person, who hath the proper and regular jurisdiction, as of course and of common right; in opposition to persons who are extraordinarily appointed. In some acts of parliament we find the bishop to be called "Ordinary;" and so he is taken at the common law, as having ordinary jurisdiction in causes ecclesiastical. *Dr. Burn.*

[i] *O God, &c.*] We have a divine command to use Litanies in time of trouble; for the Scripture saith, "Is any afflicted, let him pray," James v. 13. The person we pray to, is God, whose order is, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee," Psal. l. 15. The thing we pray for, is mercy; so David begins his great penitential, "Have mercy on me, &c." Psal. li. 1: and all the Litanies in the world begin with this solemn word, "Lord, have mercy on us:" so that this invocation is the sum of the whole Litany, being a particular address for mercy, first to each Person in the glorious Trinity, and then to them all together: and the address is urged by two motives; first, because we are "miserable," and, secondly, because we are "sinners," upon both which grounds we extremely need "mercy:" which being as well a confession of faith, as an epitome of the whole Litany, every one is to repeat these four verses intirely after the minister. *Dean Comber.*

As we have the authority of Scripture for the people saying "Amen" at the end of prayers, put up by the minister, so we have Scripture precedent for their joining vocally throughout the whole prayer. See Acts iv. 24. *Dr. Bennet.*

[k] *O God the Father, of heaven, &c.*] As we acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord, so we worship each Person apart, beginning with "God the Father of heaven," that is, our heavenly Father, whose throne the heaven is; and as he is our "Father," he is gracious, as he is in "heaven," he is powerful, and can do whatever he pleases, Psal. cxv. 3. As for us, we confess ourselves to be "miserable sinners," and so need both his power to deliver us out of our troubles, and his mercy to pardon us for all our sins. *Dean Comber.*

We are "sinners" by breaking his laws: and we are "miserable sinners," by incurring all the punishments due to the breach of them. We are sinners against the Father of heaven, by forgetting his works, and the wonderful things he hath done for us; by being unmindful of the rock that begat us, and forgetting the God that formed us; by not glorifying God, as our Creator and Preserver, nor regarding the operations of his hand: so that we may say with the prodigal, "Father, we have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy son." *Dr. Hole.*

[l] *O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, &c.*] The Arians, and other hereticks, denied the divinity of the Son, and so refused to worship him; but we, with the true catholick Church, give the Son the same worship with the "Father," John v. 23. calling him not barely the Son of God, but "God the Son," that is, we own him to be God equal with the Father, and make the same request to him for mercy, giving him the title of "Redeemer of the world," Heb. ii. 9; 2 Cor. v. 19; not the Redeemer of one sect or sort of men, as some parties

1 Pet. i. 18. 19. 2 Cor. v. 19. the world : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

1 Thess. iii. 11, 12, 13. 2 Thess. iii. 5. Acts iv. 24, 25. i. 16. John xv. 26. O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding[m] from the Father and the Son : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity[n], three Persons and one God : have mercy upon us miserable sinners. 1 John v. 7. Matthew xxviii. 19.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God : have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

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proudly pretend, but the Redeemer of all mankind, and therefore of us, though we confess ourselves to be miserable sinners. *Dean Comber.*

The second Person of the Trinity hath here the name of God given to him, equally with the Father: and it is given to him by holy Scripture in sundry places. St. Paul calls him "God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5; and elsewhere tells us, that "he thought it no robbery," or usurpation, "to be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews brings in the Father, saying to him, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom;" and again, when he bringeth him into the world, he saith, "Let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6, 8. Where not only the divine name, but the divine nature, and divine honours, are ascribed to him: which cannot be but to a divine person. *Dr. Hole.*

We have sinned not only against God the Father, but against his Son and our Saviour, by neglecting or refusing the tenders of salvation made by him; by not closing so heartily as we should with the proffered terms of peace and reconciliation; by slighting his holy ordinances, rejecting his word, neglecting his sacraments, not duly repenting at his call, nor believing his promises, nor giving heed to the precepts of his Gospel, nor being thankful for his death, nor being mindful of his example, nor anxious for the welfare of those souls which he bought so dear. To him therefore we have cause to cry for mercy and pity. *Dr. Hole, Dean Comber.*

[m] *O God the Holy Ghost, proceeding* &c.] Many of the old hereticks, and especially Macedonius, denied the divinity of the "Holy Ghost" also; but we, with the catholick Church, own him to be very "God," and after St. Paul's example, do pray to him as God, 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13, declaring that he "proceedeth" (not from the Father by the Son, as the Greeks hold, but) "from the Father and the Son," John xv. 26. Wherefore as he is of the same nature with the Father and the Son, we make the same petition to him for "mercy."

We were baptized in his name, and therefore we must call on his name. *Dean Comber.*

We make the same supplication to the third Person in the Trinity, because we have sinned against him as well as against the two former. For though we have not, it may be, fallen into the "unpardonable sin" against him, Matt. xii. 32, yet the best of us have many other ways sinned against the Holy Ghost and grieved this blessed Spirit, by quenching his good motions, by resisting his calls, by neglecting his gifts, contemning his graces, by not profiting by those ordinances which are the means he uses to convert, confirm, and comfort us, and by cherishing evil thoughts and pursuing wicked purposes in spite of the methods he uses for our sanctification. *Dr. Hole, Dean Comber.*

[n] *O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, &c.*] We have owned the Trinity of Persons, and now we confess as Scripture teacheth us, that these three are one God, 1 John v. 7, and so we worship the whole Trinity together "as three Persons and one God," repeating the same great and necessary request for mercy from the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Dean Comber.*

This we find to be suitable to the ancient practice of the catholick Church, which, after a solemn invocation of each Person in the Godhead, joined them all in one and the same request for mercy. And our Church here teaches us to imitate their example by doing the same; and that for a very good reason: for every sin, which we commit against any one Person in the Trinity, is committed against the rest; and the mercy and pardon, which we desire, must come from the whole: yea, the misery, from which we expect to be relieved, proceeds not from any single Person, but from the joint and undivided concurrence of the whole Trinity. *Dr. Hole.*

A Litany being an earnest or vehement address to the throne of grace, the earnestness or vehemence of our Litany is seen in all its parts or divisions: namely, in the invocation, in the deprecations, in the intercessions, and in the conclusion.

First, in the invocation: which is addressed, not as in other prayers to God in general, but to every Person in the Trinity separately, and then to all the three Persons jointly. By the separate invocation we are taught to acknowledge "every Person by himself to be God and Lord;" and by the joint invocation to acknowledge also, that "there are not three Gods nor three Lords." So that herein is contained a creed or confession of faith: and not only so, but also a confession of sin. We say that we are "miserable sinners." And as the first confession of sin in our Liturgy, and that of faith in the Apostles' Creed, were repeated after the minister by the whole congregation; so likewise are these short forms of invocation, wherein both those confessions are united. But if these serve to express our faith and humility, how much more our importunity? Nothing in any Liturgy, ancient or modern, was ever framed, more artful or more forcible than this invocation. *Dr. Bisse.*

Remember not, Lord, our offences[o], nor the offences of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins: spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.

Ps. lxxix. 5, 8. cvi. 6. Is. lxiv. 9. Joel ii. 17.

Spare us, good Lord.

From all evil and mischief; from sin[p], from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation,

Ps. xci. 2—6. Gen. xx. 6. Eph. vi. 10, 11. 1 Pet. v. 8, 9, 10. Rom. i. 18. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness,

Eph. iv. 17, 18. Prov. xvi. 18. Gal. v. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. 1 John iii. 15. 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

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[o] *Remember not, Lord, our offences,* &c.] Having opened the way by the preceding invocation, we now begin to ask; and because deliverance from evil is the first step to felicity, and the proper business of Litany, we begin with these deprecations, or, as St. Paul calls them, "supplications," 1 Tim. ii. 1, which he reckons as the first kind of prayers, made for removing of evil. And both the Eastern and Western Church do thus begin their Litanies; and both theirs and ours are a paraphrase upon that piece of the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil." And whether we respect the evil of sin or the evil of punishment, it is never unseasonable for us miserable sinners to pray to our "good Lord" to "deliver us." Wherefore our Church (after a petition for forbearance) doth here in a curious method reckon up all the kinds of evil in the world, as well those of sin with the causes, effects, and kinds of them in the heart and in the life, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth petitions, as those of punishment temporal and spiritual, in the ninth and tenth petitions, from all which we pray to be delivered: adding the means by which we desire to be delivered, namely, by all that Jesus did and suffered for us, in the eleventh and twelfth petitions: and the peculiar times when we would be delivered, in our life, in death, and at the last judgment, in the thirteenth petition. *Dean Comber.*

Here in the first place we pray to our Redeemer and Mediator, that he would not "remember our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers:" which he may not only with justice permit to intercept from us, as they naturally often will, the blessings, that we might otherwise have inherited; but, if we have imitated wicked ancestors, instead of taking warning by them, he may with equal justice punish us more severely, not indeed than we deserve, but than he would have done otherwise, to prevent the contagion from growing general and inveterate. Accordingly the second Commandment threatens to "visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children:" and the Psalmist, according to the marginal, and perhaps righter translation, prays as we do, "O remember not against us the iniquity of them, that were before us," Psalm lxxix. 8.

The words, "and be not angry, with us for ever," beg, that the corrections, which he doth see fit to inflict on us, for surely we all feel some, he would in mercy shorten. It is common language to speak of afflictions, that last any time, as if they were endless. And the expostulation of David in the just quoted psalm, "How long, O Lord? wilt thou be angry for ever?" ver. 5, fully vindicates this petition, which was doubtless taken from thence. *Abp. Secker.*

In the parts now about to follow it should be observed, that the words "Good Lord, deliver us," have a respect in every place to the sentence previously uttered by the minister: so that the prayer is to be understood thus: "Good Lord, deliver us from all evil and mischief, from sin, &c." These words, "Good Lord, deliver us," are put in the last place, that the people might not seem to beg deliverance from they knew not what; but, after they had mentally uttered the several particulars together with the minister, they might in this summary manner vocally beg deliverance from them all. And certainly no words could more properly be vocally uttered by them, than those, which are but few, and yet are the principal ones, and include the substance of the whole prayer.

The frequent use of, "good Lord, deliver us," is however no vain repetition. It is every time applied to distinct matter, and consequently makes a distinct prayer: and it is as if we should say frequently, as we certainly must, in any other prayer, such words as these, "Grant, O Lord, &c," "We beseech thee, &c."

What has been said of the words, "Good Lord, deliver us," may be easily applied to the following form, "We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord:" which has always a respect to the words going before; and every time that it is used, makes a distinct prayer.

It has been already observed, that, when a prayer is used by way of responses, both minister and people are to join, at least mentally, in the whole; though they vocally pronounce only their respective parts. This should be carefully remembered in the Litany, wherein there are extraordinary occasions for it. *Dr. Bennet.*

[p] *From all evil and mischief, from sin,* &c.] Having here besought our blessed Lord to deliver us "from all evil and mischief" in general, that is, from every thing bad and hurtful to us: we deservedly rank "sin" the foremost of such things; and pray, first, against the original cause of human wickedness, the secret "crafts" and open "assaults of the devil," and its dreadful consequences, "God's wrath and everlasting damnation;" then against the principal transgressions of his laws by name, subjoining, "and all other deadly sin." By this we mean not to deny, that the just "wages of" every "sin is death," Rom. vi. 23; though "there are," as we learn from St. John, "sins, not unto death," 1 John v. 16, 17, that is, comparatively; but only to pray against the peculiarly deadly with peculiar earnestness. But still, that we may leave out none, we petition lastly to be delivered "from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil;" every iniquity of every kind and degree. *Abp. Secker.*

Good Lord, deliver us.

1 Cor. vi. 13, 18. Exod. xxxii. 30. 1 Sam. ii. 17. Mark iv. 18, 19. Eph. iv. 22. Rev. xx. 10.

From fornication, and all other deadly sin; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

Good Lord, deliver us.

Ps. xviii. 13, 14. Matt. viii. 24, 25, 26. 1 Kings viii. 37, 38, 39. Ps. xlvi. 9. Gen. iv. 10. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Eccles. ix. 12.

From lightning and tempest[q]; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all sedition[r], privy conspiracy, and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and Commandment,

Gal. v. 19, 20. Ps. lxiv. 5. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 10. 1 Cor. xii. 24, 25. Rom. ii. 4, 5. Is. v. 24. 2 Sam. xii. 9.

Good Lord, deliver us.

By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation[s]; by thy holy Nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation,

1 Tim. iii. 16. Luke ii. 11, 21. Matth. iii. 13, 14, 15. iv. 1, 2.

Good Lord, deliver us.

By thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion[t]; by thy

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[q] *From lightning and tempest*, &c.] Then we proceed to deprecate the present sufferings, that our sins have merited: and intreat our merciful Redeemer to preserve us, both from such, as God's immediate hand inflicts; "lightning and tempest, plague" properly so called, "pestilence" or epidemick diseases of any sort, "famine and sudden death;" and from such also, as men's unreasonable passions produce; whether they be temporal as "battle and murder;" or spiritual, as "false doctrine," with its fruits, "heresy and schism;" and what begets them all, "hardness of heart" in regard to God's commands, and "contempt of his word," which contempt was never more widely spread and infectious, than at present.

We have indeed been blamed for praying against "sudden death." But the whole Christian Church hath done it from ancient time: and nature and reason, as well as religion, directs us to do it. Some, we own, and we wish they were many, may be always prepared thoroughly, in all respects, to die at any time. Yet even these may have cause to wish for warning of their death on account of other persons. Their example under the approach of it will usually be very instructive; and their dying advice more than ordinarily beneficial to their friends, dependents, and relations: whom also their being taken away at once may shock, to a degree, for which they would be extremely sorry, whatever they might otherwise choose for themselves. But, even on their own account, Christian humility would surely desire a little space for completer preparation. And they, who profess to wish the contrary, are they so very certain, as this implies, that every part, both of their worldly affairs and their eternal concerns, is in the best condition, to which it can be brought? Or may not possibly this appearing readiness to die at any time arise, either from a secret dread to think of dying at all, or a secret unbelief, more or less, of what will follow after death? But, whatever a few may imagine best for themselves, justly or unjustly; some previous notice is undeniably best for the generality: and common prayers must be adapted to common cases; always submitting it to God, to make exceptions, where he shall think proper. *Abp. Secker.*

[r] *From all sedition*, &c.] The former evils were levelled against our own persons and estate, but these aim at the ruin of the kingdom and the church. Sedition and privy conspiracy endeavour to subvert the government; false doctrine and heresy attempt to destroy religion: to which (on occasion of our late accursed civil war) since his majesty's happy restoration, was added, "from rebellion—and schism:" and good reason was there so to do, since that rebellion and schism did murder one of our best kings, and thousands of his loyal subjects, and also pull the Church to pieces: we have seen the sad effects, and therefore we pray against the causes. *Dean Comber.*

[s] *By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation*, &c.] Having thus expressed from what things we desire to be delivered, we earnestly intreat our good and gracious Lord to shew this mercy to us, "by the mystery of his holy Incarnation," and so on: that is, by the means, and for the sake, of all that he hath done and suffered for us. The same manner of expression is used, not only in common speech on other occasions, and in the liturgies of the ancient church on this, but in the Scripture itself: where St. Paul "beseeches" Christians "by the mercies of God," Rom. xii. 1; "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 1; "by his coming and their gathering together to him," 2 Thess. ii. 1: and Daniel intercedes with God thus, "According to all thy righteousness, let thine anger be turned away: defer not for thine own sake, O my God." Dan. ix. 16, 19. *Abp. Secker.*

The same vehemence of devotion, before noticed in the invocation, breathes likewise in the deprecations of the Litany, namely, in those petitions against evils, whether incident to the soul or body. Now these, being many in number, and differing in kind, are cast into small divisions, or short heads of prayer, in extent resembling the Collects: which however are not concluded, as the Collects are, by a bare assent, the people saying "Amen;" but by an earnest supplication, the people crying, "Good Lord, deliver us." Again: whereas the Collects are concluded in general, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or the like form; after these, all the particulars of his merit, all that he did, suffered, and obtained for us, from "the mystery of his holy incarnation," to his "glorious ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost," are summed up to strengthen and increase our faith. These are called by some obsecrations: and, being recited in order by the minister, and inforced by that repeated cry of the people, "Good Lord, deliver us," how do we in a manner "take heaven by force!" *Dr. Bisse.*

[t] *By thy Cross and Passion*, &c.] The ancient Fathers

Luke xxii. 44. Eph. ii. 14, 15, 16. 1 Pet. iii. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 19. Rom. iv. 25. vi. 4. Eph. iv. 8. Heb. ii. 3, 4.

precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost,

Good Lord, deliver us.

1 Sam. x. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 30, 31. Numbers xxiii. 10. Ps. xxii. 15, 19. Jude 24.

In all time of our tribulation[u]; in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgement,

Good Lord, deliver us.

2 Chron. vi. 27. Eph. v. 25—27. Matt. xvi. 18. Acts xiii. 10, 11. Prov. iv. 11.

We sinners do beseech thee to hear us[x], O Lord God; and that it may please thee to rule and govern thy holy Church universal in the right way;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to keep and strengthen in the true worshipping of thee, in righteousness and holiness of life, thy Servant *GEORGE*, our most gracious King and Governour; Ps. xvii. 5. xviii. 20—23. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to rule his heart in thy faith, fear, and love, and that he may evermore have affiance in thee, and ever seek thy honour and glory; Ps. xxvii. 13. lxxxvi. 11, 12. xx. 7.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to be his defender and keeper, giving him the victory over all his enemies; Ps. cxliv. 10. 1 Chron. xvii. 10.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bless

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of the Greek church in their Litany, after they had recounted all the particular pains in Christ's passion, as they are set down in the four Gospels, and by all and by every one of them called for mercy and deliverance, as here we do, added after all, and shut up all with this petition, "By thine unknown sorrows and sufferings, good Lord, have mercy upon us, save, and deliver us:" for he felt more of them than we know, or can distinctly express. *Bp. Cosins.*

[u] *In all time of our tribulation*, &c.] As we have need of protection and deliverance continually, so we proceed to beg for it, not only "in all time of our tribulation," or adversity; but "in all time of our wealth," or prosperity; for, when we seem in the most flourishing state, we are often in the most danger of evil; and of sin, the worst evil. But, as "the hour of death" is a season of peculiar trial and terror; and "the day of judgment" will determine our lot for ever: we therefore intreat his more especial grace and favour at both. The former indeed fixes our condition at the latter. But still, as the best life and death obtain acquittal and reward, only through the pardoning goodness of our Judge; we have great cause to pray for ourselves, as St. Paul did for Onesiphorus, "that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day," 2 Tim. i. 18. *Abp. Secker.*

[x] *We sinners do beseech thee to hear us*, &c.] This part of our Litany, commonly called the intercessions, is instituted by God, who commands us to "make intercessions for all men," 1 Tim. ii. 1; and it is drawn after the best and most primitive forms, being used first in those ages wherein the Christian's charity was so large as to desire blessings for all sorts of men; a sordid or an evil man in his fear may pray for his own deliverance, but he must have a charitable soul who can with equal devotion pray for others, as for his own self: and he, who would so pray, cannot have a more methodical or comprehensive form than these intercessions, which reckon up every degree of men in their due place, and leave out none that we would wish to pray for. *Dean Comber.*

This part of our Litany is very properly introduced with the following supplication: "We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God!" We acknowledge ourselves unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer up our prayers to thee, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast declared that thou "hearest not sinners." Yet for the sake of "Jesus Christ the righteous" we beseech thee to receive us, though vile and sinful, yet humble and penitent; and mercifully to accept our petitions which we are now going to present to thee. "And that it may please thee to rule and govern thy holy Church universal in the right way;" this sentence is not complete, till the people have answered, "We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord." The sense and stopping shew this here, as well as in the former part: and all these intercessions should be read accordingly; the minister keeping up his voice throughout the service. *Waldo, Collis.*

Because it may seem presumptuous for us to pray for others, since we are unworthy to pray for ourselves, before we begin, we acknowledge that we are "sinners:" but yet, if we are penitent, we know our prayers will be acceptable: and therefore in humble confidence of his mercy, and in obedience to his command, "We sinners do beseech him to hear us" in these our intercessions, which we offer up, first, for the "holy Church universal," the common mother of all Christians, as thinking ourselves more concerned for the good of the whole, than of any particular part. After this we pray for our own Church, to which, next to the catholick Church, we owe the greatest observance and duty; and therein, in the first place, for the principal members of it, in whose welfare the peace of the Church chiefly consists: such as is the "king," whom, because he is the supreme governor of the Church in his dominions, and so the greatest security upon earth to the true religion, we pray for in the three next petitions, that he may be orthodox, pious, and prosperous. And though at present we may be happy under him; yet because his crown doth not render him im-

and preserve their Royal Highnesses *George* Prince of *Wales*, the Princess of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family;

Ezra vi. 10. 1 Chron. xxix. 19. 2 Sam. vii. 29.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to illuminate all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of thy Word; and that both by their preaching and living they may set it forth, and shew it accordingly;

2 Tim. ii. 7, 15. Tit. ii. 7. 2 Cor. ii. 16. Eph. vi. 18, 19. Col. iv. 3.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to endue the Lords of the Council, and all the Nobility, with grace, wisdom, and understanding;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bless and keep the Magistrates, giving them grace to execute justice, and to maintain truth;

Prov. viii. 14, 15, 16. Ezra vii. 25, 26. Jer. vii. 5, 6, 7. Exod. xviii. 21, 22.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bless and keep all thy people;

Numb. vi. 22, 23, 24.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord;

Ps. cxxiii. 1. xxiv. 11. Phil. ii. 1, 2. Ezek. xxiii. 39.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give us an heart to love and dread thee, and diligently to live after thy commandments;

2 Thess. ii. 5. Jer. xxiii. 40. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. Deut. vi. 17.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give to all thy people increase of grace to hear meekly thy Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit;

2 Cor. ix. 8. Jam. i. 21. 1 Tim. i. 5. Matth. xiii. Eph. v. 9.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived;

2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. Ezek. xiii. 22, 23.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

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mortal, and the security of the government ordinarily depends upon the "royal family," we pray in the next place for them (and particularly for the heir apparent) that they may be supplied with all spiritual blessings, and preserved from all plots and dangers.

The Jews and Gentiles always reckoned their chief priests to be next in dignity to the king; and all ancient Liturgies pray for the clergy immediately after the royal family, as being the most considerable members of the Christian Church, distinguished here into those three apostolical orders of "bishops, priests, and deacons;" though in all former Common Prayer Books they were called the "bishops, pastors, and ministers of the Church," except in the Scotch Liturgy, which for "pastors" had "presbyters."

Next to these follow those who are eminent in the state, namely, "the lords of the council and all the nobility," who by reason of their dignity and trust have need of our particular prayers, and were always prayed for in the old Liturgies, by the title of "the whole palace."

After we have prayed for all the nobility in general, we pray for such of the nobility and gentry as are "magistrates," or more inferior governors of the people, according to the example of the primitive Christians, and in obedience to the positive command of St. Paul, who enjoins us to pray "for all that are in authority," 1 Tim. ii. 2.

After these we pray for "all the people," that is, all the commons of the land, who are the most numerous, though the least eminent; and unless they be safe and happy, the governors themselves cannot be prosperous, the diseases of the members being a trouble to the head also.

And though we may be allowed to pray for our own nation first, yet our prayers must extend to all mankind; and therefore in the next place we pray for the whole world, in the very words of ancient Liturgies, namely, that "all nations may have unity" at home among themselves, "peace" with one another, "and concord," that is amity, commerce, and leagues.

Having thus prayed for temporal blessings both for ourselves and others, it is time now to look inward, and to consider what is wanting for our souls: and therefore we now proceed to pray for spiritual blessings, such as virtue and goodness. And, first, we pray that the principles of it may be planted in our "hearts," namely the "love and dread" of God, and then that the practice of it may be seen in our lives, by our "diligent living after his commandments."

But though we receive grace, yet, if we do not improve it, we shall be in danger of losing it again; and therefore, having in the former petition desired that we might become good, we subjoin this that we may grow better: begging "increase of grace," and also that we may use proper means thereunto, such as is "meekly hearing God's word, &c."

From praying for the sanctification and improvement of those within the Church, we become solicitous for the conversion of those that are without it; being desirous that "all should be brought into the way of truth who have erred or are deceived."

2 Tim. iv. 17. Phil. iv. 13. 2 Cor. vii. 6. Ps. cxvi. 6. cxlv. 14. Rom. xvi. 20.

That it may please thee to strengthen such as do stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted; and to raise up them that fall; and finally to beat down Satan under our feet;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

Ps. cxvi. 8. lxxii. 12. 2 Cor. i. 4.

That it may please thee to succour, help, and comfort, all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

Ps. cxxi. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 25, 26. Gen. iii. 16. xxxv. 16. Phil. ii. 27. Ps. xxii. 9, 10. lxxix. 11. cvi. 46.

That it may please thee to preserve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring of child, all sick persons, and young children; and to shew thy pity upon all prisoners and captives;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to defend, and provide for, the fatherless children, and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed; Ps. cxlvi. 9. 1 Tim. v. 5. Ps. ix. 9.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men; 1 Tim. ii. 1.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts; Matt. v. 44. Ps. lxxxv. 4. Ezra vi. 22.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them; Ps. civ. 13—15. cxlv. 15.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances[y]; and to endue us with

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But though those without the Church are the most miserable, yet those within are not yet so happy as not to need our prayers; some of them standing in need of "strength," and others of "comfort:" these blessings therefore we now ask for those that want them.

Having thus considered the souls of men, we go on next to such things as concern their bodies, and to pray for all the afflicted in general; begging of God "to succour all that are in danger," by preventing the mischief that is falling upon them; "to help those that are in necessity," by giving them those blessings they want; and "to comfort all that are in tribulation," by supporting them under it, and delivering them out of it.

And because the circumstances of some of these hinder them from being present to pray for themselves; we particularly remember them, since they more especially stand in need of our prayers, such as are "all that travel by land or by water," and the rest mentioned in that petition.

There are other afflicted persons who are unable to help themselves, such as are "fatherless children and widows;" who are too often destitute of earthly friends; and such as are "desolate" of maintenance and lodging; or are "oppressed" by the false and cruel dealings of wicked and powerful men: and therefore these also we particularly recommend to God, and beg of him to "defend and provide for" them.

And after this large catalogue of sufferers, as well in spiritual as temporal things; lest any should be passed who are already under, or in danger of, any affliction, we pray next that God would "have mercy upon all men."

And then, to shew we have no reserve or exception in our charity or devotions, we pray particularly for "our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers;" who we desire may be partakers of all the blessings we have been praying for, and that God would moreover "forgive them, and turn their hearts."

After we have thus prayed first for ourselves, and then for others, we proceed to pray for them and ourselves together: begging, first, whatsoever is necessary for the sustenance of our bodies, comprehended here under the "fruits of the earth."

And then, in the next petition, asking for all things necessary to our souls, in order to bring them to eternal happiness, namely, "true repentance, forgiveness of all our sins, &c, and amendment of life." Which last petition is very proper for a conclusion. For we know that if we do not amend our lives, all these intercessions will signify nothing, because God will not hear impenitent sinners. We therefore earnestly beg repentance and amendment of life, that so all our preceding requests may not miscarry. *Wheatly.*

[y] —*to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances;*] This petition is somewhat differently worded from what we meet with in other places in the Liturgy: for here is a threefold distinction of "sins, negligences, and ignorances," for all which we implore the divine pardon. By the first, I apprehend, we are to understand our gross and deliberate transgressions; the recollection of which should fill us with the deepest sorrow and the most bitter remorse. By the second are meant our less heinous sins, into which we have been led by inadvertency, carelessness, or surprise: how many of which, alas! do the very best of us daily run into? And though these are by no means of so grievous a nature as the former, yet still they are sins, and ought to be acknow-

Acts xi. 18. Luke xii. 47, 48. Ps. ciii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23. 2 Tim. iii. 15. the grace of thy Holy Spirit to amend our lives according to thy holy Word;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

Heb. iv. 14—16. Son of God[z]: we beseech thee to hear us.

Son of God: we beseech thee to hear us.

O Lamb of God: that takest away the sins of the world; John i. 29.

Grant us thy peace. John xvi. 33.

O Lamb of God: that takest away the sins of the world; Luke xvii. 13.

Have mercy upon us.

O Christ, hear, us. 1 John v. 13, 14.

O Christ, hear us.

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ledged and repented of. All "negligences" are at least to be considered as sins of omission, inasmuch as they are contrary to that "care" and "watchfulness," so expressly required of us in the Gospel. "Ignorances," which are the last mentioned, are so far sinful and criminal, as they are in any degree voluntary, or caused by a neglect of using the proper means of attaining knowledge. Where ignorance is absolutely unavoidable, it is a misfortune indeed, but no sin: but to plead it in any other case is rather an aggravation, than an extenuation of our guilt. *Waldo.*

The same fire of devotion, before noticed in the Litany, burns likewise in these intercessions: which, being cast, like the deprecations, into small portions, are, like them, not closed with an Amen, but by an earnest supplication, the people crying, "We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord." This interchangeable way of worship, performed by turns between the minister and people, is of the same advantage to the worshippers in the Litany, as in the Psalms: it mutually relieves, and yet provokes and inflames the piety of the congregation.

But with this grateful interchange there is kept up the most exact order. For in the deprecations from evil, we proceed gradually from the evil of sin to the evil of punishment, from spiritual to temporal, from the greater to the less. In the intercessions for good, we begin with the "holy Church universal;" then particularizing for the principal members of that part of it, established among us: proceeding in order for the king and the royal family; for the orders and degrees of men in church and state; first, for the spiritualty, then for the temporalty; for all bishops, priests, and deacons; for the lords of the council, and all the nobility and magistrates; and lastly, for all the people of the realm. Then we pray for all kinds of good for all men; for the piety of the faithful; for the conversion of the deceived; for the confirmation of the weak; for the relief of the afflicted; for the preservation of the distressed; for the reconciliation of enemies: for the grant of plenty, and things necessary for the body; and lastly, for the pardon of sins, and the things necessary for the soul: or, as in our Lord's prayer, for "our daily bread," and for "forgiveness of our trespasses." Let those, who accuse our publick prayers as too general in their forms, view this punctual and regular enumeration in our Litany of all evils, that are hurtful, or of all goods, that are expedient, for the bodies or the souls of men; either for the Church in general, or for any of its members in particular; let them seek diligently through their own performances, whether extemporary or composed; let them search all their assemblies, and "consider diligently and see, if there be any such thing" in their worship; so full in its matter, so regular in its method, and solemn in its expressions, as our Litany; or "hath been heard any thing like it." *Dr. Bisse.*

[z] *Son of God, &c.*] After going through the preceding petitions, we endeavour to excite our desires of a gracious acceptance to as much fervency as we can, by short but affectionate sentences, uttered alternately, in a sort of pious emulation, between the minister and people; and humbly importuning our Redeemer, as the eternal "Son" and spotless "Lamb of God," the Lord's "Christ," and the Lord of Christians, that he would "grant us" his promise and "peace," which includes all blessings, and "have mercy upon us," in bestowing what we have asked. For this purpose, it is acknowledged, we repeat several times the same words, with very little variations. But such "repetitions," far from "vain," Matt. vi. 7, are most expressive ones: the natural, the almost constant language of earnestness. Hence our Saviour, in his agony, reiterated the same words thrice, Matt. xxvi. 44: and David, in a transport of thanksgiving, even to the six and twentieth time, as may be seen in the 136th Psalm. And these very petitions, which we use, are warranted by the ancient offices of the Christian Church. *Abp. Secker.*

In these addresses to our Saviour we beseech him first, by his divinity, as he is the "Son of God," and so omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent, to "hear our prayers," and to become our advocate for their acceptance. Secondly, We beseech him by his suffering for us, when he "became the Lamb of God," and died to "take away the sins of the world," John i. 29, that he will "grant us" an interest in "his peace," John xiv. 27, in the peace he made with God, and that peace of conscience following thereupon: and that "he will have mercy upon us," so as to pity us, and deliver us from the guilt and punishment of our offences. And again, as he is the "Lord Christ" our anointed Mediator, we beg of him to "hear us," and procure a gracious answer to all these intercessions. *Dean Comber.*

These shorter intercessions, which follow upon the longer ones, and produce an agreeable variety in the Litany, are admirably calculated to give fresh vigour and earnestness to our devotion. No person, who has attended seriously to the foregoing part, can join in this without feeling a peculiar warmth and fervency in his mind; whilst he thus renews his supplications, with an holy importunity, to the throne of grace. But to answer the pious design of the Church, and that these incentives to devotion may have their full effect, it is necessary that the minister, who officiates, should read every sentence with great energy and deliberation; making a proper pause after each, that the people may have time to answer. *Waldo.*

Lord, have mercy upon us[a].
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Ps. cxxiii. 3. Luke xviii. 13.

¶ *Then shall the Priest[b], and the people with him, say the Lord's Prayer[c].*

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Priest. O Lord, deal not with us after our sins[d].

Answer. Neither reward us after our iniquities. Ps. ciii. 10.

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[a] *Lord, have mercy upon us*, &c.] Finally, that our conclusion may be suitable to our beginning, we close up all with an address to the whole Trinity for that "mercy," which we have been begging in so many particulars, and this one word comprehends them all, so that this is the epitome of the whole Litany; and considering how constantly, and how many ways we need mercy, surely we cannot ask it too often, and we ought every time to ask it with a renewed importunity, especially here, where the only impediment to all our intercessions, and that which alone can hinder them, is our sins; and, if we can obtain mercy for them, all our other requests shall certainly prevail. *Dean Comber.*

This conclusion is no less excellent than the beginning, winding up and inforcing all with redoubled vehemency and flame of devotion. For how forcible must the supplications of the Church be, when the priest repeating twice that invocation, "O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;" the people subjoining as often, "Grant us thy peace," "Have mercy upon us;" then followed and quickened with the alternate repetition of that primitive form, or lesser Litany, directed to the Trinity, "Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us; Lord, have mercy upon us:" and then shutting up all in that ever acceptable prayer of our Lord: how forcible, I say, how piercing, must this united cry of the congregation be? How must it come up unto God, like the cry of the Israelites, when "God heard their groaning, and had respect unto them?" Exod. ii. 24, 25.

It should be observed, that all the petitions, from the beginning of the deprecations to the end of the intercessions, are directed to the Son, the second Person in the Trinity, as the true and proper object of our worship: which appears from these expressions, "Spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood:" "By thy holy incarnation, by thine agony, &c, Good Lord, deliver us." And so in the close, "Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us: O Christ, hear us." And then, as the Litany began with the Trinity, going on to the Son; so, at the close, from the Son it returns to the Trinity again, saying, "Lord, have mercy, &c." *Dr. Bisse.*

[b] *Then shall the Priest*, &c.] The last part of this devout Litany we call the supplications, which seem to have been first collected and put into this form when the barbarous nations began to over-run the empire, about 600 years after Christ, though the particular sentences are either taken out of holy writ, or else gathered from ancient Liturgies; but considering the troubles of the Church militant, and the many enemies that every good man always hath in this world, this part of the office is suitable for all times. *Dean Comber.*

[c] *—say the Lord's Prayer.*] Pious antiquity usually annexed the Lord's Prayer to every office, to shew their high esteem of it, and their mean opinion of their own composures, which receive life and value from this divine form. We have expounded this prayer before, and are only to note here, that when our hearts are stirred up to devotion by the foregoing offices, we shall find ourselves very fit to put up these petitions with renewed affections, and so may supply the defects of our more careless repetition of it before. *Dean Comber.*

Having previously enlivened our devotion, we proceed to offer up, what deserves the most lively efforts of it, that perfect summary of all our petitions, "The Lord's Prayer:" which, though it occurs several times in the several services of the morning, occurs but once in this; and cannot easily be recited too often, provided it be with attention and affection. *Abp. Secker.*

[d] *O Lord, deal not with us after our sins*, &c.] We are all ready to say we suffer greatly, but the Church will have us remember we also suffer justly; yea, "God exacteth of us less than our iniquities deserve," Job xi. 6. and as David confesses, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness," Psal. ciii. 10. Upon which plain affirmations of holy Scripture is this pious supplication grounded: in which we clear his justice in punishing us, but apply to his mercy to proportion his chastisements according to our ability of bearing, and not according to the desert of our offences. *Dean Comber.*

The word "after" in old English signifies "according to." Thus to "live after God's commandments" is to live according to them: and God's "dealing with men after their sins, or rewarding them after their iniquities," is his dealing with them, or rewarding them, according to their sins or iniquities; that is, as their sins or iniquities deserve. *Dr. Bennet.*

Hitherto the Litany hath dwelt on no single subject of prayer long; but comprehended a surprising variety of the most needful articles in a very narrow compass. The remainder is of a different nature. It considers our state here very justly, as furnishing perpetual ground of

Let us pray.

O God merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful; Mercifully assist our prayers that we make before thee in all our troubles and adversities, whensoever they oppress us; and graciously hear us, that those evils, which the craft and subtilty of the devil or man worketh against us, be brought to nought; and by the providence of thy goodness they may be dispersed; that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ps. li. 17. xxxviii. 9. xii. 5. cii. 17. Rom. viii. 26. Ps. l. 15. lxxi. 13. xxxiii. 10. Luke xxii. 31, 32. Job v. 12. 2 Cor. xi. 3. xii. 7—9. Ps. cxlii. 6. lxxix. 13. Eph. iii. 20, 21.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thy Name's sake.

Ps. xii. 5. xliv. 26. lxxix. 9.

O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them.

Ps. xliv. 1. lxxviii. 2, 3, 4.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honour.

Ps. cix. 21.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

Answer. As it was in the begin-

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sad reflexion to every thoughtful mind; and applies itself wholly to express to our heavenly Father the sentiments required in such a condition. The seemingly happiest persons in the world are very inconsiderate, if they do not discern a great deal to mourn over, in others and themselves. Yet, at the same time, the most afflicted are to blame, if they sink under, either what they see or feel. But the common duty of both is, "in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make their requests known unto God," Phil. iv. 6. And therefore this part of the Litany, though first introduced on occasion of extraordinary distress lying heavy on Christendom eleven or twelve hundred years ago, will be too seasonable in every age, till one of truer piety and more tranquillity shall come, than hath been yet known, or is likely soon to take place.

As the transgressions, by which we offend God, are the cause of our sufferings, these our supplications begin very properly, with intreating, in Scripture words, that on humbling ourselves before him, he would not "deal with us after our sins, nor reward us after our iniquities," Ps. ciii. 10. Next to this follows, as is repeated in the sequel, an exhortation, "Let us pray;" which may appear somewhat strange, considering that prayers immediately precede in both places. But they are short ejaculations, not continued forms, like those which follow. And besides, this redoubled admonition, towards the conclusion of the office, will very usefully remind those, who may possibly be growing languid and inattentive, in how important a work they are engaged. Something there was of this kind, even in the heathen devotions. But in the old Liturgies of Christian Greece, "Let us pray; let us pray earnestly; let us pray more earnestly;" often returns. (See p. 37. note *u*.)

And the succeeding prayer, which is of ancient use in the Western Church, deserves our utmost earnestness. It begs of him, who, as the psalmist assures us, "will not despise a broken and contrite heart," which phrase has been already explained, (see the note on the Sentences, p. 2.) that "in all our troubles" he will both "assist us to make our prayers before him" as we ought, "and *graciously* hear us:" that so the designs of our *enemies*, visible and invisible, may be disappointed, and we may feel and express a just gratitude for our deliverance. To this the congregation answer, not as usual, Amen: but in a short form of Scripture words, Numb. x. 35, Psal. lxxix. 9, more strongly expressive of pious fervency. The minister instantly returns another Scriptural address to God, Ps. xliv. 1; pleading with him, and suggesting to us, "the noble works," done by him for his church and people in general, and many good persons in particular; which, if we have not seen with our eyes, "we have heard with our ears;" holy writ and other history hath related them: or "our fathers have declared them to us," partly as performed "in their days," partly "in the old time before them." And since "his arm is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear become heavy, that it cannot hear," Isa. lix. 1; the congregation again petition him, in the same words as before, only changing one for another, still more pathetick; that he would "arise, help and deliver them" for the "honour" of "his name:" not for our merits, but his own glorious perfections, and the instruction of his creatures; that we and all men may learn to love and praise and serve him. Yet to this we are indispensably bound, even while the painfullest view of our sorrows and wants is before our eyes: and therefore in the midst of our supplications we proceed immediately to ascribe that glory to the sacred Three, which ever has been, and is, and will be, their due; whether infinite wisdom allots to us prosperity or adversity. Nor is the mixture of doxologies with complaints less common in acts of worship, than it is reasonable. The book of Psalms uses it frequently: the old Latin and Greek Liturgies use it on this very occasion: and surely in our private devotions, even when most afflicted, we still give praise to God.

But though we own it our duty to glorify him in the severest sufferings, if it be his will that we should undergo them; yet, conscious of our weakness, we go on to beg his protection against them, or deliverance of us from

ning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Luke i. 68, 74, 75. From our enemies defend us, O Christ.

Luke xvii. 13. Exod. ii. 25. *Graciously look upon our afflictions.*

Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16. Pitifully behold the sorrows of our hearts.

Matt. xii. 20. *Mercifully forgive the sins of thy people.*

Ps. xxv. 16—18. Favourably with mercy hear our prayers.

Job xxxiii. 26. 1 Pet. iii. 12. *O Son of David, have mercy upon us.*

Matt. ix. 27. xx. 30. Both now and ever vouchsafe to hear us, O Christ.

Graciously hear us, O Christ; graciously hear us, O Lord Christ.

1 John v. 14, 15. *Priest.* O Lord, let thy mercy be shewed upon us;

Ps. xxxiii. 22. *Answer.* As we do put our trust in thee.

Let us pray.

Is. lxiii. 15, 16. WE humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities; and for the glory of thy Name turn from us all those evils that we most righteously have deserved; and grant, that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in holiness and pureness of living, to thy honour and glory; through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ps. lxxix. 9. Ezra ix. 13. Ps. cvi. 7, 8, 44, 45. Ps. lxi. 4. Luke i. 74, 75.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests; Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

2 *Cor.* xiii.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

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them, in mutual ejaculations of the utmost warmth: not that moving expressions will any otherwise incline him to grant mercy, than as they fit us to receive it, by imprinting on us a just sense of our dependence; which, if used with sincerity, they naturally do.

Then we close this part of the Litany with a more continued form of address to our merciful "Father;" composed originally above 1100 years ago; corrupted indeed afterwards, by intreating God to "turn from us" all "evils" for the sake of the intercession of his saints; but reformed in our Liturgy, not only by leaving out that addition, but by inserting for completer security a new clause; "Grant, that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy." And thus it is, that we borrow from the Church of Rome. By this prayer, so amended, we humbly confess our infirmities and unworthiness: yet beg, that, notwithstanding both, we may, if God sees it proper, escape the afflictions, which we fear; but if not, that, being still assured of his goodness to us, we may with Job "though he slay us, trust in him," Job xiii. 15; and that, for proof of this, we may as faithfully do our duty under the heaviest pressures, as the highest exaltation; "and evermore serve him in holiness, and pureness of living, to his honour and glory;" saying with Job again, "shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Job ii. 10; i. 21. *Abp. Secker.*

Thus have we gone through the consideration of this excellent and peculiar office of our Church; and upon the whole we may affirm, that as in the Liturgy in general we may be said to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," so in the Litany we worship him in the perfection of beauty. *Dr. Bisse.*

May God give us grace to use these and all our devotions in so right a manner, that, from praying to him amidst the troubles and sorrows of this world, we may be taken, in his good time, to praise him for ever amidst the joys of the next, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Abp. Secker.*

Here endeth the Litany.

PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS,

UPON SEVERAL OCCASIONS[e],

¶ *To be used before the two final Prayers of the Litany, or of Morning and Evening Prayer.*

PRAYERS.

For Rain.

O God, heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all them that seek thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, all things necessary to their bodily sustenance; Send us, we beseech thee, in this our necessity, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth to our comfort, and to thy honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Matt. vi. 33.

Jer. v. 23, 24. Ps. civ. 13, 14, 15. cxlv. 15.

For fair Weather.

O Almighty Lord God, who for the sin of man didst once drown all the world, except eight persons, and afterwards of thy great mercy didst promise never to destroy it so again; We humbly beseech thee, that although we for our iniquities have worthily deserved a plague of rain and waters, yet upon our true repentance thou wilt send us such weather, as that we may receive the fruits of the earth in due season; and learn both by thy punishment to amend our lives, and for thy clemency to give thee praise and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

1 Pet. iii. 20. Gen. viii. 21.

Jer. v. 25. Ezekiel xxxviii. 22. Exod. ix. 31—34. Job ix. 4. Ps. cvii. 31.

In the time of Dearth and Famine.

O God, heavenly Father, whose gift it is, that the rain doth fall, the earth is fruitful, beasts increase, and fishes do multiply; Behold, we beseech thee, the afflictions of thy people; and grant that

Jer. v. 24. Ezekiel xxxiv. 26, 27. Deut. vii. 13. Ps. viii. 6, 7, 8. Gen. i. 20.

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[e] *Prayers and Thanksgivings upon several occasions.*] Though the various miseries of mankind are exactly enumerated in the Litany, yet they are but barely mentioned there, and at some times some particular evils lie so heavy upon us, and some great mercies are so necessary for us, that it is requisite we should have solemn forms upon such occasions to annex to this office, that so it may fully suit all our necessities. Solomon supposes there will be special prayers made in the temple in times of war, drought, pestilence, and famine, 1 Kings viii. 33, 35, 37; and Lactantius observes, that the very Gentiles addressed themselves to the gods, in times of war, plague, and drought. Tertullian also notes that the Christians did make extraordinary prayers on such occasions. And both the Greek and Latin Church have their several offices for such times, out of which these prayers are taken, which are not designed for a complete office; because when any judgment continues long, and grows general, our governors draw up a peculiar office, and enjoin it to be observed with solemn fasting: only these prayers are continually to be said with the Litany upon such occasions, that so, according to that law of Charles the Great, "In time of famine, plague, and war, the mercy of God may be immediately implored, without staying for the king's edict." *Dean Comber.*

Only the two first prayers, namely, for rain, and for fair weather, were in the first book of Edw. VI. and there placed at the end of the Communion service. But in the second book of Edw. VI. these two with the three following, namely, in time of dearth, war, and plague, were all five inserted in the place, where they now stand. But their respective thanksgivings were added by order of King James the First.

Note also, that the five foregoing prayers are deprecations; whereas the three following, namely, for ember-weeks, for the parliament, for all conditions of men, are intercessions; these were added at the last review, 1661. *Dr. Bisse.*

the scarcity and dearth, which we do now most justly suffer for our iniquity, may through thy goodness be mercifully turned into cheapness and plenty; for the love of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Jer. v. 25. 2 Chron. xx. 9. Is. xxx. 23, 24.

Or this.

O God, merciful Father, who, in the time of Elisha the prophet, didst suddenly in Samaria turn great scarcity and dearth into plenty and cheapness; Have mercy upon us, that we, who are now for our sins punished with like adversity, may likewise find a seasonable relief: Increase the fruits of the earth by thy heavenly benediction; and grant that we, receiving thy bountiful liberality, may use the same to thy glory, the relief of those that are needy, and our own comfort; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

2 Kings vi. 24, 25. vii. 6, 7, 16. Jer. viii. 14. Ps. xlvi. 1. Rom. xv. 4. Ps. cxxxii. 15.

1 Cor. x. 31. Ps. l. 15. 1 John iii. 17. Gen. xviii. 5.

In the time of War and Tumults[f].

O Almighty God, King of all kings, and Governour of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful, to them that truly repent; Save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, from the hands of our enemies; abate their pride, asswage their malice, and confound their devices; that we, being armed with thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the only giver of all victory; through the merits of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

1 Tim. vi. 15. Ps. xxii. 28. cxxxv. 6.

2 Chron. xx. 6. Lam. iii. 39. Ps. cxix. 137. Jer. xviii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xii. 10. Zech. x. 11. Ps. xviii. 27. lxxvi. 10. 2 Sam. xv. 31. Psal. xxxiii. 10. Ps. lxii. 1, 2. cxxi. 7, 8. l. 15. 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

In the time of any common Plague or Sickness.

O Almighty God, who in thy wrath didst send a plague upon thine own people in the wilderness, for their obstinate rebellion against Moses and Aaron; and also, in the time of king David, didst slay with the plague of Pestilence threescore and ten thousand, and yet remembering thy mercy didst save the rest; Have pity upon us miserable sinners, who now are visited with great sickness and mor-

Numb. xvi. 49. 2 Sam. xxiv. 14—16.

Drought, deluge, or excessive rain, famine, rebellion, war, tumult, plague, and pestilence, are among the most dreadful visitations of the Almighty. These judgments he sometimes sends upon the earth, that the inhabitants of the world may learn righteousness. But so much have we of these realms been indebted to the mercy of his Providence, that, within the remembrance of more than the present generation, some of these forms have not been found necessary. The forms themselves, however, are so plain and perspicuous, that no particular elucidation of them can be required. It may, therefore, be enough to observe, that similar prayers occur in ancient Liturgies, from which some of these appear to be chiefly taken; and that each is well suited to the emergency to which it is appropriated by our Church. *Shepherd.*

These occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings are only to be made use of, when we are generally distressed upon emergencies; not, as some persons may desire, when they think them requisite, but when there is a grievous necessity. *Collis.*

[f] *In the time of War and Tumults.*] In this prayer we address ourselves to the Almighty Governor of all things, whose justice in punishing us sinners with this evil we acknowledge, and whose mercy to deliver us from it, on our true repentance, we hope for, and cannot hope for it else; complaining of the pride and malice of our enemies; of which they must be guilty, if the war on our side be lawful, otherwise there would be peace; and in the genuine spirit of Christianity, intreating, that the one may be "abated," the other "asswaged;" which is praying for them, as well as ourselves. And till they suffer their dispositions to be mended, we beg that their "devices" and enterprises may be "confounded," which word, as dreadful as it sounds too often in passionate common speech, means here no more than disappointed; and this is the worst we wish, even to those "who hate us, and despitefully use us." Matt. v. 44. *Abp. Secker.*

tality; that like as thou didst then accept of an atonement, and didst command the destroying Angel to cease from punishing, so it may now please thee to withdraw from us this plague and grievous sickness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ *In the Ember Weeks*[1], *to be said every day, for those that are to be admitted into Holy Orders.*

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, who hast purchased to thyself an universal Church by the precious blood of thy dear Son; Mercifully look upon the same, and at this time so guide and govern the minds of thy servants the Bishops and Pastors of thy flock, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred Ministry of thy Church. And to those which shall be ordained to any holy function give thy grace and heavenly benediction; that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth thy glory, and set forward the salvation of all men: through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Or this.

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of all good gifts, who of thy divine providence hast appointed divers Orders in thy Church: Give thy grace, we humbly beseech thee, to all those who are to be called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great Name, and the benefit of thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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[1] *In the Ember Weeks, &c.*] "Ember" is a word of uncertain derivation. Some suppose it signifies ashes, and some abstinence. Abstinence or fasting, it is commonly known, was anciently accompanied with the act of sitting upon ashes, or of sprinkling ashes upon the head. In the Western Church, the ember weeks were styled, "the fasts of the four seasons." This title, as well as the usage mentioned above, appears to favour the derivation already given. But others derive ember from a Saxon word, signifying course, or circumvolution, for the ember weeks return at fixed and certain periods, and are fasts in course.

The ember days are the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, after the first Sunday in Lent, the feast of Pentecost, September 14, and December 13. The weeks in which these days fall are called ember weeks; and the Sundays immediately following are, according to ancient institution, appointed by the 31st canon of our Church for the ordination of the Clergy.

These two prayers, though the latter of them is found in the Scottish Liturgy, were added to our Book of Common Prayer only at the last review. The intention of the form is sufficiently obvious: and as the ordination of ministers is a subject of primary importance, it is to be regretted that one or other of the forms is not more generally read on the Wednesday and Friday in the ember week, in such of our parish churches as have service on those days. Whether they were intended to be read every day in the ember weeks, or only on every ember day in the week, is a question that has not universally been answered in the same way. The words of the rubrick appear to countenance the former practice. *Shepherd.*

The former of these two prayers is thought to be most properly used in the early part of the week, as it is for the ordainers and the ordained; to guide the minds of the bishops and their assisting pastors, that they may, with wisdom and fidelity, make choice of persons, well qualified by their learning and piety, to be admitted into the office of the ministry. The other is proper to be used toward the latter end of the week, to beseech God to afford the grace of his Holy Spirit to all those, who have been made choice of, and who are to be admitted to the office of a priest, or the administration of a deacon. *Collis.*

In this appointment our Church follows the constant custom of the catholick Church, and that seems derived from the original precedent of the apostles themselves, see Acts xiii. 2, 3. A custom of the highest importance to be continued for ever in the Church; to the end, that all those, who are appointed to feed the flock of Christ, may be true and lawful shepherds, having "entered in by the door," I mean, the apostolical way of ordination, by prayer, and laying on of the hands of the bishop, and not hirelings, who climb up some other way. *Dr. Bisse.*

¶ *A Prayer that may be said after any of the former*[h].

O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petitions; and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us; for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. c. 5. Dan. ix. 9. Mark ii. 7. Ps. vi. 9. Rom. vii. 23, 24, 25. Jam. v. 11.

¶ *A Prayer for the High Court of Parliament*[i], *to be read during their Session*[k].

MOST gracious God, we humbly beseech thee, as for this Kingdom in general, so especially for the High Court of Parliament, under our most religious and gracious King[l] at this time assembled: That thou wouldest be pleased to direct and prosper all their consultations to the advancement of thy glory, the good of thy Church, the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign, and his Dominions; that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours, upon the best and surest foundations,

Ps. cxxii. 6. Prov. xi. 14. Is. lxi. 8. Nehem. ii. 20. Prov. xxi. 30. 1 Cor. x. 31. Ps. cxxii. 7, 8, 9. 2 Chron. x. 6—10. Prov. xxix. 2.

[h] *A Prayer that may be said after any of the former.*] This short devout Collect is joined to the ancient Litanies of the Western Church, and, since sin is the cause of all the foregoing judgments, this may be added to any of the former, as a prayer for pardon of sin; for which reason also it is used by some devout men, (when they use the Church-prayers in private) instead of the Absolution. *Dean Comber.*

This prayer is not repeated so frequently as its excellence seems to require. It is drawn up in the metaphorical, but expressive, language of Scripture; has been long employed in the conclusion of Litanies, and other forms of prayer, by the churches of the West, and retains strong marks of primitive devotion. This Collect I have seen in some of Henry's Primers: but it is in neither of Edward's books, having been restored to the Common Prayer only in the reign of Elizabeth. *Shepherd.*

It is generally placed wrong in our Common Prayer Books, namely, after the prayer for all conditions of men; having been so placed by the ignorance or carelessness of the printers at the review just after the Restoration, and been continued there notwithstanding the interference of the commissioners at that time. In the sealed books, which by the Act of Uniformity are ordered to be kept in all cathedral or collegiate churches, in the courts of Westminster, and in the tower of London, it stands before the prayer for the Parliament. *Collis.*

[i] *A Prayer for the High Court of Parliament,*] Not only did the primitive Christians pray for the senate of heathen Rome, but the Gentiles used to sacrifice in the beginning of their publick councils, which used also to be held in some sacred place: and surely we Christians ought not to shew less devotion, especially when we have so good a composition, to offer up our desire in, as this prayer is. *Dean Comber.*

This other occasional prayer "for the High Court of Parliament" is of the like publick importance to the state, as the former, namely, for the Ember weeks, is to the church; and so both jointly to our constitution; in which the church and state are so united and linked together by the fundamental laws of this realm, that they cannot be divided without being destroyed; a maxim fully proved by the consultations of that memorable Parliament, which overturned both, and which gave occasion to have this very prayer added here to our publick intercessions after the Restoration. *Dr. Bisse.*

[k] *—to be read during their Session.*] If the Houses adjourn themselves for a fortnight or a longer time, it is still the same session: but, if they are prorogued for a shorter time, it is not reckoned a part of it, they not being then impowered to do business, as upon adjournments they are. This prayer was composed at the last review, and, it is said, by Dr. Brabourn. *Collis.* See the conclusion of the next note.

[l] *—under our most religious and gracious King*] This is a very fit prayer for a blessing on the consultations of parliament. But it may be asked, how the compilers of it could venture to call in it every one of our kings, in all time to come, "most religious." Now certainly they did not intend to prophesy, that, in the common meaning of the word, they always would be so; nor yet to require, that we should call them so in a sense, that was not true. And therefore they must either mean by "religious," what it sometimes means in the language, from which it is derived, the object of most awful regard, sacred, a title frequently ascribed to kings: or indeed rather, "most religious" must be understood in the same manner, as the next word to it, "gracious," constantly is, without the least difficulty or scruple, both in the Liturgy and out of it; and as the titles "most Christian," and, "most Catholick," are; to denote the good qualities, which princes profess and should have; and therefore their subjects are willing and ought to hope they have; and, by reminding them, endeavour that they may have. Accordingly this very epithet "most religious" was constantly ascribed to all successive emperors in St. Chrysostom's and St. Basil's Liturgies, the common ones of the Greek Church, as it is to all successive kings in ours. The intention being thus cleared, the lawfulness of joining in the expression is evident. In the prudence of choosing it originally we are less concerned. Yet in defence of that we may plead, that this prayer was composed and originally used in the reign of a prince, acknowledged to be unfeignedly religious, King Charles the First. *Abp. Secker.*

The first and last parts of this prayer are taken from one with the same title, among the additions and alter-

that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations. These and all other necessaries, for them, for us, and thy whole Church, we humbly beg in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ our most blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Prov. xxiv. 3, 4.

Phil. iv. 6, 19. Eph. vi. 18. Rom. xv. 5.

¶ *A Collect or Prayer for all Conditions of men*[m], *to be used at such times when the Litany is not appointed to be said.*

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially, we pray for the good estate of the Catholick Church; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those, who are any ways

Is. xlv. 12. Ps. xxxvi. 6. Rev. iv. 11. Job vii. 20.

1 Tim. ii. 1. Ps. lxvii. 1, 2.

Gal. vi. 10. Ps. cxxii. 6.

John xiv. 16. xvi. 13.

Eph. iv. 1, 2, 3. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

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ations made in the Litany and Prayers of the Church, by the command of King Charles the First. The intermediate part appears to have been new at the Restoration. *Edit.*

[m] *A Collect or Prayer for all Conditions of men*, &c.] We are expressly commanded to pray for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1. And though we do so in the Litany and Communion office, yet, that it might not be omitted any day, this Collect is added to supply the place of the Litany, and, when that is not used, this is: hence some call it "the lesser Litany," and it teaches us to express a hearty charity to all, especially to the afflicted, and to those that are sick, who are usually prayed for in this form. *Dean Comber.*

In this Collect we extend our intercession to all nations on earth, that God's "name may be hallowed" among the heathen, where it is not yet known; and his "kingdom" of grace may "come," where it is not yet preached. But more especially we pray for the holy Catholick Church, that in it by the guidance and government of God's Spirit, his "will may be done on earth as it is in heaven:" and thus is this Collect visibly built upon the plan of our Lord's prayer. And I must observe, that as in the Creeds we acknowledge one holy Catholick Church; so in our prayers we always count our own Church, as contained and embodied in it. Wherefore, neither in this intercession, nor in the Litany, nor in the prayer for the Church militant, is there any express mention of the Church of England, or of this Church as any ways distinct or separate from others: so great is her charity to all national churches: and so great her duty to the Catholick Church, "the mother of them all." See p. 55, note n.

In this intercession for all mankind, for all Christians in all ranks, there is provided a clause whereby any person may be prayed for in particular, if visited with any kind of affliction, especially if with healthy sickness, which is chiefly intended in this place. *Dr. Rose.*

Neither is there, nor the following one of general thanksgiving, to be taken from any other Liturgy: both are excellent; and every one, who desires it, may, by signifying that desire, have a separate share in either. This provision is a very useful and comfortable one: and persons would do well, on all fit occasions, to take the advantage of it. Only they, who have received benefit by being prayed for, should not forget to return thanks: but conscientiously avoid our Saviour's reproof, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" Luke xvii. 17.

The general thanksgiving may perhaps to some appear superfluous, after we have thanked and praised God in the use of the psalms and hymns. But it was inserted at the Restoration, because others complained it was wanting. *Abp. Secker.*

Before the addition of this prayer, which was made at the last review, the Church had no general intercession "for all conditions of men," except on those days upon which the Litany was appointed. For which reason this Collect was then drawn up, to supply the want of that office upon ordinary days; and therefore it is ordered by the rubrick "to be used at such times, when the Litany is not appointed to be said:" consonant to which it is now, I believe, a universal practice, and a very reasonable one, I think, to read this prayer every evening as well as on such mornings as the Litany is not said.

The form has been generally ascribed to Bishop Sanderson: but it is a tradition at St. John's college in Cambridge, that Bishop Gunning, who was sometime master there, was the author. It is said to have been originally drawn up much longer than it is now, and that the throwing out of a great part of it, which consisted of petitions for the king, the royal family, clergy, &c. who are prayed for in other collects, was the occasion why the word "finally" comes in so soon in so short a prayer. It is not improbable, that the Bishop might have designed to comprehend all the intercessional collects in one: but that the others, who were commissioned for the same affair, might think it better to retain the old forms, and so only to take as much of Bishop Gunning's as was not comprehended in the rest. *Wheatly.*

afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; [*especially those for whom our prayers are desired,] that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake[n]. *Amen.*

* This to be said when any desire the Prayers of the Congregation.

Heb. xiii. 3. Acts xii. 5. 2 Chron. xvi. 12. Col. i. 9, 11. Ps. cvii. 17—19. xxxiv. 19.

THANKSGIVINGS[o].

¶ *A General Thanksgiving*[p].

2 Cor. i. 3. ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men; [* *particularly to those who desire now to offer up their praises and thanksgivings for thy late mercies vouchsafed unto them.*] We

Gen. xxxii. 10. Ps. cvii. 8. Luke xvii. 17, 18.

* This to be said when any that have been prayed for desire to return praise.

[n] —*for Jesus Christ his sake.*] This is a mistake, either of the printers, or of the compilers. The English language, to express different connexions and relations of one thing to another, uses, for the most part, prepositions. The Greek and Latin among the ancients, and some too among the modern languages, as the German, vary the termination or ending of the substantive to answer the same purpose. These different endings are in those languages called cases. And the English, being derived from the same origin as the German, that is, from the Teutonick, is not wholly without them. For instance, the relation of possession, or belonging, is often expressed by a case, or a different ending of the substantive. This case answers to the genitive case in Latin, and may still be so called; though perhaps more properly the possessive case. Thus "God's grace:" which may also be expressed by the preposition; as, "the grace of God." It was formerly written "Godis grace." We now very improperly always shorten it with an apostrophe, even though we are obliged to pronounce it fully: as, "Thomas's book;" that is, "Thomasis book;" not "Thomas his book," as it is commonly supposed. So that "Christ his sake" is a mistake for "Christis sake," or, as now commonly written, "Christ's sake." *Bp. Lowth.*

[o] *Thanksgivings.*] Notwithstanding the Hallelujah, the Gloria Patri, and daily psalms, it was thought by some that our Liturgy wanted forms of praise, upon which account the particular thanksgivings were added in the time of King James I. and this general one at the time of King Charles the Second's restoration. *Dean Comber.*

This, which is admirably composed, is said to have been drawn up by Bishop Sanderson. *Wheatly.*

[p] *A General Thanksgiving.*] After the general intercession there follows likewise a general thanksgiving. For though in the psalms and hymns after the lessons, with the several doxologies interspersed, we have every where "set forth God's most worthy praise;" yet it seemed meet also in a distinct and appropriate form of thanksgiving, "to render thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands;" which, according to the first exhortation, we therefore do, beginning with that original blessing, "our creation," then "preservation," attended with all these secondary benefits and "blessings of life," "but above all," because the greatest of all, "our redemption," attended with all "the means of grace and hope of glory," thus ascending gradually through the long scale of blessings received at God's hand, from temporal to spiritual, from the first to the last, from our coming forth to our returning to him again. *Dr. Bisse.*

Indeed this is a more methodical summary of the several mercies of God "to us and to all men," than we had before: it furnishes an opportunity of thanking him more expressly for the late instances of his loving kindness to the members of our own congregation: and besides, as we cannot be too thankful to God, the acknowledgments, which we offered up at the beginning of the service, are very properly repeated at the end. For surely we ought to ask nothing of God, without remembering, what we have received from him: which naturally excites both our faith and resignation; and proposes the way for that admirable Collect, with which we conclude. *Abp. Secker.*

After enumerating the blessings for which we return our humble and hearty thanks, the form from eucharistick becomes petitionary. We beseech God to make us truly sensible of his mercies, and really thankful for them; that we may shew our gratitude, and promote his glory, not only by celebrating his praises day by day in the publick assemblies of the Church, but by walking in the paths of holiness and righteousness all our lives. These petitions we enforce through the merits of Jesus Christ; and we conclude the whole with a doxology, in which we ascribe to the Son, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory, world without end. Amen. *Shepherd.*

[illegible] for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

For Rain.

O God our heavenly Father, who by thy gracious providence dost cause the former and the latter rain to descend upon the earth, that it may bring forth fruit for the use of man; We give thee humble thanks that it hath pleased thee, in our great necessity, to send us at the last a joyful rain upon thine inheritance, and to refresh it when it was dry, to the great comfort of us thy unworthy servants, and to the glory of thy holy Name; through thy mercies in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For fair Weather.

O Lord God, who hast justly humbled us by thy late plague of immoderate rain and waters, and in thy mercy hast relieved and comforted our souls by this seasonable and blessed change of weather; We praise and glorify thy holy Name for this thy mercy, and will always declare thy loving-kindness from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For Plenty.

O Most merciful Father, who of thy gracious goodness hast heard the devout prayers of thy Church, and turned our dearth and scarcity into cheapness and plenty; We give thee humble thanks for this thy special bounty; beseeching thee to continue thy loving-kindness unto us, that our land may yield us her fruits of increase, to thy glory and our comfort; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

[illegible] *For Rain, &c.*, More particular thanksgivings being sometimes proper, we are supplied with forms on the six following occasions: (1) for rain; (2) for fair weather; (3) for plenty; (4) for peace; and deliverance from our enemies; (5) for restoring public peace at home; and (6) with two thanksgivings, either of which may be used, for deliverance from the plague, or other contagious sickness.

When the petitions which we may have offered up in any of the preceding occasional prayers, have been granted, and our desires fulfilled, when either a calamity has been removed, or a blessing vouchsafed; it is evidently the intention of the Church, that praise should be given to God, in the words of the appropriate thanksgiving here prescribed; that is, in all cases where the ordinary form is not superseded by one that is special and enjoined by authority. These occasional thanksgivings we may pass over, after making one or two general observations. Some of them are partly taken from ancient offices; and the whole are judiciously composed; being not only well adapted to the occasions for which they are appointed, but, like the preceding prayers, with which they correspond, as plain and perspicuous, as they are rational and devout. The occasional thanksgivings were composed in the reign of James, and annexed to the Litany; in 1662, they were detached from it, and printed as they now appear, after having been sanctioned by a convocation, and authorized by the Act of Uniformity. *Shepherd.*

For Peace and Deliverance from our Enemies.

O Almighty God, who art a strong tower of defence unto thy servants against the face of their enemies; We yield thee praise and thanksgiving for our deliverance from those great and apparent dangers wherewith we were compassed: We acknowledge it thy goodness that we were not delivered over as a prey unto them; beseeching thee still to continue such thy mercies towards us, that all the world may know that thou art our Saviour and mighty Deliverer; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ps. lxi. 3. Ps. cxviii. 10—15. xviii. 48, 49. Ps. cxxiv. 1—6. xxxi. 19—21. Ps. xxxvi. 10. 1 Kings viii. 59, 60. Ps. cix. 26, 27. Is. xlix. 26.

For restoring Publick Peace at Home.

O Eternal God, our heavenly Father, who alone makest men to be of one mind in a house, and stillest the outrage of a violent and unruly people; We bless thy holy Name, that it hath pleased thee to appease the seditious tumults which have been lately raised up amongst us; most humbly beseeching thee to grant to all of us grace, that we may henceforth obediently walk in thy holy commandments; and, leading a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, may continually offer unto thee our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for these thy mercies towards us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ps. lxviii. 6. Old Tr. Ps. lxv. 7. Ps. cxliv. 1, 2. Heb. xii. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Ps. lxxix. 13. cvii. 21, 22.

For Deliverance from the Plague, or other common Sickness.

O Lord God, who hast wounded us for our sins, and consumed us for our transgressions, by thy late heavy and dreadful visitation; and now, in the midst of judgement remembering mercy, hast redeemed our souls from the jaws of death; We offer unto thy fatherly goodness ourselves, our souls and bodies which thou hast delivered, to be a living sacrifice unto thee, always praising and magnifying thy mercies in the midst of thy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ps. lxviii. 21. Is. lxiv. 7. Jer. viii. 12. Ps. cvi. 43—45. cxvi. 8. Ps. ciii. 1—4, 13. Rom. xii. 1. Heb. xiii. 15. Eph. iii. 21.

Or this.

WE humbly acknowledge before thee, O most merciful Father, that all the punishments which are threatened in thy law might justly have fallen upon us, by reason of our manifold transgressions and hardness of heart: Yet seeing it hath pleased thee of thy tender mercy, upon our weak and unworthy humiliation, to asswage the contagious sickness wherewith we lately have been sore afflicted, and to restore the voice of joy and health into our dwellings; We offer unto thy Divine Majesty the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, lauding and magnifying thy glorious Name for such thy preservation and providence over us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Deut. xxviii. 15, 16. Is. lix. 12. 1 Sam. vi. 6. 2 Chron. vii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 13. Ps. xxx. 2, 11. Heb. xiii. 15. Jude 25. Nehem. ix. 5. Ps. cxlv. 5. xci. 9—11.

As the service, which has been now examined, is almost every where separated, and very properly, from the following one, namely, the Communion service, by the singing of a psalm, this appears a convenient place for saying a little concerning that branch of publick worship, which in many places is too much disregarded.

As singing is capable of expressing strongly every state, in which the mind can be, towards every object; so there never was perhaps any one nation upon earth, civilized or barbarous, that did not make this a part of the honour paid by them to the God, whom they adored. We find in the Old Testament, it was practised by the Jews, before their law was given, as well as after. The book of psalms consists wholly of religious songs: and directs the "saints of the Lord, to sing unto him, and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness: to sing unto the honour of his name, and make his praise glorious; to sing praises unto our God, while we have our being." Ps. xxx. 4; lxvi. 2; cxlvi. 2. The prophets foretell, that, in the Gospel times, men shall sing for the majesty "of the Lord:" and, which brings the predictions home to us, "they shall cry aloud, and glorify God, in the isles of the sea." Isa. xxiv. 14, 15. Accordingly St. Paul, not only himself with Silas, even in prison, "sang praises unto God;" Acts xvi. 25; but appoints, that all Christians should "speak to themselves, and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody with grace in their hearts to the Lord," Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16. And St. James prescribes, "Is any one merry?" in a joyful frame of mind, on account of blessings received, (for the word, mirth, comprehended anciently the most serious kind of gladness,) "let him sing psalms." James v. 13.

In pursuance of these rules, the first Christians made singing a constant part of their worship: as, besides the ecclesiastical writers, even a heathen, Pliny, informs us; and the whole congregation joined in it. Afterwards indeed the singers by profession, who had been prudently appointed to lead and direct them, by degrees usurped the whole performance. But at the Reformation the people were restored to their rights: and it made a much quicker progress for the pleasure and comfort, which they found in this practice: a circumstance, that ought to endear it to considerate persons not a little. And as the only way of singing, known in common parochial churches, is by the metre psalms; unless we join in that, we entirely omit this branch of our duty.

It is true the verse translation of the psalms, generally used, is void of ornament; and hath expressions, often low and flat, sometimes obsolete. And I wish a better were substituted in its place. But still, in many other cases, ancient solemn forms of words are thought venerable, when they are far from elegant: not to say that the language of our forefathers, even where it may seem very uncouth at present, had in its time frequently full as much beauty and propriety, as ours. And several words of it have been, for that reason, revived by some of our best modern authors. But at least the matter, comprised in the words, of which I am speaking, is so highly respectable, that the mind, which is affected only by the phrase, and not by the sense, must be a light one indeed.

Again, it is true also, that the tunes, to which the psalms are sung, are most of them plain and slow, and the voices of many in the assembly unharmonious, and apt to be ill-managed. But tunes, designed for the multitude to join in, who have never been regularly instructed, must be plain and slow, and such as they have been accustomed to: for which purpose the number should be moderate. Ours are many of them recommended, and as it were consecrated by long usage. Confessors for the protestant cause have composed them. Martyrs for it have yielded up their dying breath in them. And several of them are thought, by competent judges, no way deficient in real melody. Amongst a variety of people part of them with bad ears, and most of them with untaught voices, there will be some who had better totally abstain; only attending to the sense, as well as the sound, of what is uttered by the rest: and others, that should moderate themselves to a prudent degree of lowness, till they have learnt, how to exert themselves more properly. But all who are, or can be qualified, (and there are few who cannot,) should bear such a part as they are able. It may be done, without in the least disordering the more skilful singers, who perform the very useful office of raising and supporting the tune. This in many congregations is done by an organ, the charity children, or both. But then the organ should express the tunes plainly and distinctly, and make very moderate intervals between the lines: the children should be taught to sing in exact time and concert with it; and the whole congregation should accompany them fervently, yet with prudence. Taking this care though there should still happen to be some little discords, they would be entirely lost in the general chorus: the effect of which would be noble and elevating, if we took rightly into our thoughts the whole of the matter instead of cavilling at minute particulars.

Consider the nature of a wild multitude, in its original state, met together at the call of some vehement ungoverned passion: how alarming the concourse, how frightful and horrid the confused and hideous cries of it must be. Then consider the same multitude, softened and cultivated by the gentle influences of religion, and unanimously assembling at stated seasons, to sing forth the praises of the wise and good Parent of all, and echo to each other the precepts of a rational, and mild, and beneficent life here, as the means of obtaining eternal felicity hereafter. Can there be a happier change of scene, a sweeter and more pleasing view? and, suppose the harmony made by them were ever so little better, than "shouting unto God with the voice of triumph," as the Scripture expresses it, and "making a joyful noise unto the Rock of their salvation," Ps. xlvii. 1, xcv. 1, yet what worthy and humane and pious heart is there, that would not be charmed with the sound, and zealously join in it? we are disposed thus on all occasions.

Amongst our ancestors, who judged of propriety as discreetly as ourselves, to say no more, the very highest joined humbly and cheerfully with the lowest of their fellow Christians in the duty of psalmody, however artlessly performed. And it is worth our while to reflect what it is, either to disdain, or be ashamed, or be too indolent to lift up our voices to the honour of our Maker, when we come into his house professedly to worship him, and he hath commanded that one part of his worship shall be this.

But if we will not employ our lips in the service, we may still fix our minds upon it: at least we should not hinder others from doing either. And particularly we

should abstain from giving the bad example, and the offence, of indecently holding conversation at that time, for which there cannot surely be so pressing an occasion, but that it may very safely be deferred till after church, if not altogether omitted.

In the singing of Psalms, different persons use different postures. The prose psalms, I believe, are and ever have been repeated by all persons every where standing. In the verse psalms we all stand at the Doxology. And, in what goes before, the reason for doing it is exactly the same, and a very strong one: that the whole is sung to the glory of God, and often directly addressed to God. Accordingly we read in the Old Testament that not only the "Levites" were "to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even," 1 Chron. xxiii. 30; but that when "they waited with instruments of music to praise the Lord, all Israel stood," 2 Chron. vii. 6; and that they said to the people, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God." Neh. ix. 5. We read likewise, that in a vision of St. John, in the book of Revelation, "a great multitude whom no man could number, stood before the throne, and cried with a loud voice, Salvation to our God," Rev. vii. 9, 10: and in another, that "they who had gotten the victory over the beast, stood and sang the song of Moses and the Lamb." Rev. xv. 2, 3. Standing therefore, as it is plainly the fittest posture in itself, is the authorized one also: and were it more uncommon than it is, would be far from a dishonourable singularity. But still, as very many in most congregations, either have by long habit been prejudiced in favour of sitting, or, though they disapprove the custom, feel a difficulty of quitting it, unless every one did: they should not be censured for a practice by which they mean nothing amiss; but kindly encouraged to an alteration in this point, which we may thus hope will gradually become general. *Abp. Secker.*

To prevent improprieties in the performance of this excellent part of publick devotion, and to provide for due solemnity in it as well as in the rest, it is much to be wished, that ministers should not leave the choice of proper psalms to their parish clerks, but should take upon themselves the trouble of directing it; or rather, that they should once for all fix and establish a course of psalms, to be given out and sung in their order. By which means the congregations might be furnished with those which are most proper, and also with a due variety; and, by degrees, the most useful parts of the Book of Psalms would be implanted in the minds of the people, and become familiar to them.

And to the end the Psalms, so chosen, may be sung in a more decent manner; it is further to be wished, that the people of every parish, and especially the youth, were trained up and accustomed to an orderly way of singing some of the Psalm tunes, which are most plain and easy, and of most common use: since that is the proper season of forming the voice as well as the mind; and the regularity, into which it is then cast with great ease, will remain with them during life; and not only enable them to contribute their part to the decency of this performance, but even, for the sake of that talent, will incline them to be constant in attending the publick service of the Church.

It is however by no means recommended, that the clergy should invite or encourage the introduction of those uncommon and ridiculous tunes, which have sometimes been brought into churches, and the consequence of which is, that the greater part of the congregation are silenced and do not join in this exercise at all: but that they should endeavour to bring their whole congregation, men and women, old and young, or at least as many as they can, to sing a few of the plainest and best known tunes in a decent, regular, and uniform manner, so as to be able to bear their part in them at the publick service of the Church. *Bp. Gibson.*

THE[a]

COLLECTS[b], EPISTLES, AND GOSPELS[c]

TO BE USED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

¶ *Note, that the Collect appointed for every Sunday, or for any Holy-day that hath a Vigil or Eve*[d], *shall be said at the Evening Service next before.*

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[a] *The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, to be used throughout the year.*] Concerning the feasts, &c, observed in the Church of England, the reader is referred to notes on the Tables and Rules, at the beginning of the Common Prayer Book.

[b] *Collects.*] For the meaning of this term, see note *e*, p. 40, on the Order for Morning Prayer.

The Collects, which follow, are some short, pious, and impressive prayers, collected out of the holy Scriptures, ushered in with such attributes of God, as are proper and suitable to the petitions contained in them, and offered up in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ. *Dr. Hole.* As on every day, or season, there is something more particularly commended to our meditations by the Church, so the Collect reflects chiefly upon that, though sometimes more generally upon the whole matter of the Epistle and Gospel, desiring inspiration, strength, and protection from God Almighty in the practice and pursuance of what is set before us. But concerning the matter of the several Collects a particular account will be given as each occurs. *Bp. Sparrow.*

That most of our Collects are very ancient, appears by their conformity to the Epistles and Gospels, which are thought to have been selected by St. Jerom, and put into the Lectionary by him: for which reason many believe that the Collects also were first framed by him. It is certain that Gelasius, who was bishop of Rome in the year of our Lord 492, ranged the Collects, which were then used, into order, and added some new ones of his own: which office was again corrected by Pope Gregory the Great in the year 600, whose Sacramentary contains most of the Collects we now use. But our Reformers observing that some of these Collects were afterwards corrupted by superstitious alterations and additions, and that others were quite left out of the Roman Missals, and entire new ones, relating to their present innovations, added in their room; they therefore examined every Collect strictly, and where they found any of them corrupted, there they corrected them; where any new ones had been inserted, they restored the old ones; and lastly, at the Restoration, every Collect was again reviewed, when whatsoever was deficient was supplied, and all, that was but improperly expressed, rectified. *Wheatly.*

It was the opinion of our wise and pious Reformers that these Collects being found in the Romish mass book was no objection to the use of them. For they considered, that we ought to depart from the corruptions only of that Church: and when these were intirely corrected, or cast off, they rightly judged that it would have argued in them a strange and even scandalous perverseness, not to retain those parts or offices, the soundness whereof was evident, by their being either expressly contained in, or undeniably founded upon, the word of God himself. *Dean Stanhope.*

Subjoined is a table of the Collects for Sundays and other Holidays, as they now stand in our Liturgy: noting their origin, the time of their composition, and the principal variations they have undergone. The table, which was partly formed by Bishop Cosins, and published by Dr. Comber, is divided into three compartments. The first consists of the Collects retained from ancient Liturgies; the second of such as were taken from ancient models, but were considerably altered and improved by our Reformers. The third, of such as were composed anew, and substituted in the place of others, which containing doctrines and positions, that to our Reformers seemed false, superstitious, or improper, were therefore rejected. By way of appendix is inserted a table, exhibiting the principal variations made in the Epistles and Gospels, at and since the Reformation.

PART I.

Consisting of such Collects as were retained from ancient Liturgies at the Reformation.

Collects for	Whence taken.
4 Sunday in Advent.	In some old Offices for the first Sunday in Advent.
St. John's Day.	St. Greg. Sacr. and Gothick Liturg.
The Epiphany.	St. Greg. Sacr.
1, 2, and 3 Sunday after Epiph.	The same, and St. Ambros. Liturg.
5 Epiphany.	St. Greg. Sacr.
Septuagesima.	The same.
Sexagesima.	The same.
2, 3, 4, 5 Sunday in Lent.	The same.
6 Sunday in Lent.	The same; but in St. Ambros. Liturg. for Good Friday.
Good Friday, the three Collects.	They are in all Offices with little variation: but are left out of the Breviaries of Pius V. and Clem. VIII.
Easter Day.	St. Greg. Sacr. and a Collect almost the same in the Gallic Liturg.
3 Sunday after Easter.	St. Greg. Sacr. St. Ambros. Liturg.
5 Sunday after Easter.	St. Greg. Sacr.
Ascension Day.	The same.
Whit-Sunday.	The same.
1 Sunday after Trinity.	The same. This in some old Offices is called the second after Pentecost: in others the first after the octaves of Pentecost.
The 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 after Trinity.	Are all in St. Greg. Sacr.
The Purification.	The same.
St. Michael's Day.	The same.

The reader will observe, that the greater part of this class of Collects, is found in Gregory's Sacramentary,

The first Sunday in Advent[e].

The Collect[f].

Jam. iv. 6. ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great Rom. xiii. 12.

which was composed before the year 600. All of these, therefore, are, at least, 1200 years old, and many of them are much older. For Gregory did not originally form the offices. He only collected and improved them. To wave all other proof of this, we have his own testimony, given in vindication of his conduct. "I have followed," says he, "a practice common in the Greek Church, and have altered some old Collects, and added some new and useful ones." But the generality of the Collects in his Sacramentary he compiled from Liturgies, which, in his time, were esteemed ancient.

PART II.

Consisting of Collects taken from ancient models, but considerably altered and improved by our Reformers, and the Reviewers of the Liturgy.

Collects for	Time of improvement.	How it stood before.
St. Stephen's Day.	Beginning added 1662.	Grant us, O Lord, to learn to love our enemies, &c.
4 Sund. after Epiph.	End improved 1662.	Grant to us the health of body and soul, that all those things which we suffer for sin &c.
4 Sund. after Easter.	Improved 1662.	Who makest the minds of all faithful people to be of one will &c.
Sund. after Ascension.	A little varied 1549.	This had been of old the Collect for Ascension Day, on which our venerable Bede repeated it as he was dying.
2 Sund. after Trinity.	The order inverted 1662.	Lord make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name, for thou never failest, &c.
8 Sund. after Trinity.	Beginning improved 1662.	Whose providence is never deceived, &c.
11 Sund. after Trin.	Improved 1662.	That we running to thy promises, may be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure, &c.
18 Sund. after Trin.	Improved 1662.	To avoid the infections of the devil, &c.
19 Sund. after Trin.	Improved 1662.	That the working of thy mercy may in all things, &c.
St. Paul's Day.	Improved 1549 and 1662.	In the Breviaries* a new prayer was added mentioning St. Paul's intercession; in the year 1549 the old prayer alone out of Greg. Sacr. was restored, which had our walking after his example only, which was a little varied in the year 1662.
The Annunciation.	Improved 1549.	The Breviaries had put in a new prayer about the B. Virgin's intercession, which was cast out in 1549, and the form being in St. Greg. Sacr. restored.
St. Philip and James.	Improved 1662.	As thou hast taught St. Philip and the other apostles, &c.
St. Bartholomew.	Improved 1662.	To preach that which he taught, &c, was altered, because there is no writing of his extant.
Trinity Sunday.		This Collect is no older than the Sacramentary ascribed to Alcuinus. The old Offices have another Collect for it, and call it the Octave of Pentecost.

* Had Dr. Comber said Missal instead of Breviary, he would have been more correct. For though the Collect of the day was used in the Breviary, yet it was taken from the Missal. Thus, in our Morning Prayer, the rubrick directs that the first Collect, that is, the Collect of the day, "shall be the same that is appointed at the Communion." By members of our Church, and dissenters, the Breviary, Missal, and Ritual, three very different books, are at present generally confounded. The Breviary contains mattins, lauds, &c; and if the reader considers it as corresponding with our daily service, he will not form a very erroneous opinion. The Missal, or Mass Book, answers to "the order of the administration of the Lord's Supper," together with "the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels to be used throughout the year." The Ritual is composed of occasional Offices, namely, Baptism, Matrimony, Visitation of the Sick, &c.

PART III.

Consisting of such Collects as were composed anew, and substituted in the place of those, which, containing either false or superstitious doctrines, were on this account rejected.

Collects for	Composed in
1 Sunday in Advent.	First Book of Edward VI. 1549.
2 Sunday in Advent.	The same time.
3 Sunday in Advent.	1662.
Christmas Day.	1549.
Circumcision.	The same time.
6 Sunday after Epiphany.	1662. Before this time they repeated the Collect for the fifth Sunday.
Quinquagesima.	1549.
Ash Wednesday.	The same time.
1 Sunday in Lent.	The same time.
Easter Even.	1662. No Collect for it ever before then.
Easter Sunday.	The first sentence (1 Cor. v. 7.) was added 1662.
1 Sunday after Easter.	1549. Then it was used on Easter Tuesday, and in 1662 was fixed for this Sunday.
2 Sunday after Easter.	1549.
St. Andrew's Day.	1552. Second Book of Edward VI.
St. Thomas's Day, St. Matthias, St. Mark, St. Barnabas, St. John Baptist, St. Peter, St. James, St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. Simon and St. Jude, All Saints.	All composed anew in 1549.

Yet, in the composition of some of these Collects, the compilers appear to have had an eye to the Missals and the Breviaries. They have, in some instances, preserved the introduction, and amplified or given a different turn to the petitions. *Shepherd.*

The following Table of the Weekly Collects is generally annexed to the Common Prayer Books sent, by order of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, to its members.

An alphabetical Table of the weekly Collects in the Book of Common Prayer, reduced under proper heads.

Affliction. Prayers for deliverance from, and support under afflictions. Collects for the third Sunday after the Epiphany, eighth after Trinity, and fifth Sunday in Lent.

Phil. ii. 7. humility; that in the last day, when
Matt. xxi. 5. he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and Luke xxi. 27.
dead, we may rise to the life im- 2 Tim. iv. 1.

Angels. A prayer for the guardianship of angels. Collect for St. Michael.

Charity. See *Love.*

Chastity. A prayer for Chastity. Collect for the first Sunday in Lent.

Christ. A prayer for the imitation of Christ. Collects for the Sunday next before Easter, and the second Sunday after Easter.

For the benefit of Christ's death. Collect for the Annunciation.

Church. Prayers for the universal Church. Collects for the fifth Sunday after Epiphany, the third Sunday after Easter, St. John the Evangelist, and the two first Collects for Good-Friday.

For the unity of the Church. Collect for St. Simon and Jude.

For the peace of the Church. Collects for the fifth, sixteenth, and twenty-second Sundays after Trinity.

Comfort. A prayer for spiritual comfort. Collect for the Sunday after the Ascension.

Contrition. A prayer for contrition. Collect for Ash-Wednesday.

Covetousness. A prayer against covetousness. Collect for St. Matthew's day.

Courage. A prayer for Christian courage. Collect for St. John Baptist.

Enemies. A prayer for deliverance from enemies. Collect for the third Sunday in Lent.

Example. Prayers that we may follow the example of Christ. Collects for the Sunday next before Easter, and the second Sunday after Easter.

Faith. Prayers for a right and firm faith. Collects for Trinity Sunday, St. Thomas, and St. Mark.

For faith, hope, and charity. Collect for the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Grace. Prayers for grace and assistance in our Christian course. Collects for the fourth Sunday in Advent, second in Lent, Easter-Day, third Sunday after Easter, and the first, seventh, and thirteenth after Trinity.

Heaven. A prayer for heavenly desires. Collect for Ascension-day.

For admittance to the enjoyment of God in heaven. Collects for the Epiphany, the sixth Sunday after Epiphany, and the Sunday after Ascension.

Humility. A prayer for humility and patience. Collect for the Sunday before Easter.

Illumination. Prayers for illumination, or a right judgment in all things. Collects for Whitsunday, first Sunday after Epiphany, and the ninth after Trinity.

Judgments. Prayers for deliverance from judgments. Collects for Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and the fourth Sunday in Lent.

Love. Prayers for the love of God and his laws. Collects for the fourth Sunday after Easter, and the sixth, seventh, and fourteenth after Trinity.

For love and charity. Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday.

Ministers. A prayer for the fitness of ministers. Collect for St. Matthias.

That they may be diligent. Collect for St. Peter's day.

That their labours may be successful. Collect for the third Sunday in Advent.

Mortification. Prayers for mortification. Collects for Circumcision, and Easter-Eve.

Obedience. Prayers that we may obey, and follow, the doctrine of the apostles. Collects for the Conversion of St. Paul and St. John Baptist. See *Good Works.*

Prayers. For the acceptance of our prayers. Collect for the tenth Sunday after Trinity.

Providence. Prayers for protection by God's providence. Collects for the second, third, fourth, and twentieth Sundays after Trinity.

Purity. A prayer for purity of heart. Collect for the Purification.

Renovation. A prayer for it. Collect for Christmas-day.

Religion. A prayer that we may be truly religious. Collect for the seventh Sunday after Trinity.

Saints. Prayers for the imitation of them. Collects for Innocent's day, St. Stephen, St. Philip, St. James, St. John Baptist, and All Saints.

Scripture. A prayer before reading the Scripture. Collect for the second Sunday in Advent.

Sin. Prayers for conversion from sin. Collects for the first Sunday in Advent, the first Sunday after Easter, St. Andrew, St. James, and St. Matthew.

For pardon of sin. Collects for the twelfth, twenty-first, and twenty-fourth Sundays after Trinity.

Sincerity. A prayer for it. Collect for the third Sunday after Easter.

Holy Spirit. Prayers for the direction of the Holy Spirit. Collects for the nineteenth Sunday after Trinity, and fifth after Easter.

Temptations. Prayers for deliverance from, and support under, temptations. Collects for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany, and the second in Lent.

Thoughts. A prayer against evil thoughts. Collect for the fifth Sunday after Easter.

Unbelievers. A prayer for Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks. The third Collect for Good Friday.

Good Works. Prayers for fruitfulness in good works. Collects for the fifth Sunday after Easter, and the first, ninth, eleventh, thirteenth, seventeenth, and twenty-fifth Sundays after Trinity.

[c] *Epistles, and Gospels*] The Epistles are certain portions of Scripture selected for the most part out of the writings of the apostles, containing many excellent rules and precepts for instruction and comfort in all conditions. They are called Epistles, because they were sent by way of letter by the apostles to the several churches or places to which they are inscribed: for which reason they still retain the same name. *Dr. Hole.* Though some few of these portions are taken from the Acts, or other of the canonical books, they all receive their denomination from the greater part. *Dr. Nicholls.*

The Gospels are taken out of the writings of the four Evangelists, who relate the life and actions of our blessed Saviour; as the doctrine that he taught, and the miracles by which he confirmed it; both which, being of great use for the strengthening of our faith and hope in him, are piously ordered to be read every Lord's day in the ears of the people. And in honour to our Saviour, whose words and works they are, the Church hath commanded them to be read and heard *standing;* which is a posture of reverence and resolution to adhere and *stand* to them. *Dr. Hole.* See the note on the rubrick before the Nicene Creed.

That the use of Epistles and Gospels peculiar to the several holydays was ancient, appears first by ancient Liturgies: secondly, by the testimony of the ancient Fathers. Let St. Augustin testify for the Latin Church, in his preface to his comment upon the Epistle of St. John, and in his tenth Sermon. "We heard first," says

1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. John v. 29. John xi. 23, 24, 25. Acts v. 31.

mortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

¶ *This Collect is to be repeated every day, with the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.*

The Epistle. Rom. xiii. 8.

OWE no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled

he, "the apostolical Lesson, then we sang a Psalm, after that the Gospel was read." Now let St. Chrysostom testify for the Greek; "The minister stands up, and with a loud voice calls, *Let us attend:* then the Lessons are begun:" which Lessons are the Epistles and Gospels, as appears in his Liturgy, which follow immediately after the minister hath so called for attention.

The fitness of the Epistle and Gospel for the day it belongs to, and the reason of the choice, will plainly appear, if we observe that these holy festivals and solemnities of the Church are of two sorts; the more high days, or the rest. The first commemorate the signal acts or passages of our Lord in the redemption of mankind; his incarnation and nativity, circumcision, manifestation to the Gentiles; his fasting, passion, resurrection and ascension, the sending of the Holy Ghost, and thereupon a more full and express manifestation of the sacred Trinity. The second sort is of inferior days that supply the intervals of the greater, such as are either the remaining Sundays, wherein, without any consideration of the sequence of time, (which could only be regarded in the great feasts) the holy doctrine, deeds, and miracles of our Lord, are the chief matters of our meditations, or else the other holydays. And for all these holy times we have Epistles and Gospels very proper and seasonable; for not only on high and special days, but even on those also, that are more general and indifferent, some respect is had to the season, and the holy affections the Church then aims at: as mortification in Lent; joy, hope, newness of life, &c, after Easter; the fruits and gifts of the Spirit and preparation for Christ's second coming in the time between Pentecost and Advent. But these things will be shewn in the discourse of the holydays severally. As for the Lessons, although they have another order, and very profitable, being for each day of the week, following usually the method of chapters, and taking in the Old Testament also, (the Communion dealing chiefly with the New, as most fit for the nature of that service,) yet in them also regard is had to the more solemn times by select and proper readings, as hath been shewed: this being the Church's rule and method (as she hath it from the apostle) "that all things be done unto edifying," that we may be better acquainted with God, and with ourselves, with what hath been done for us, and what is to be done by us. And this visible as well as audible preaching of Christian doctrine by these solemnities and readings, in such an admirable order, is so apt to infuse by degrees all necessary Christian knowledge into us; and the use of it to the ignorant is so great; "that it may well be feared" (as a reverend person hath forewarned) that "when the festivals and solemnities for the birth of Christ and his other famous passages of life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension, and mission of the Holy Ghost, and the Lessons, Gospels, and Collects, and Sermons upon them, be turned out of the Church, together with the Creeds also, it will not be in the power of weekly Sermons on some heads of religion to keep up the knowledge of Christ in men's hearts, &c." And no doubt, for this and other good reasons which he gives us, it was, that the primitive Christians were so exact and religious in these solemnities and meditations on the occasions of them; and therefore the Sermons of the Fathers were generally on the readings of the day, as hereafter is shewed. And we have from another the like hand, thus: "The blessings of God, whereof these solemnities renew the remembrance, are of that esteem to the Church, that we are not able to express too much thankfulness in taking that occasion of solemnizing his service. And the greatest part of Christians are such, as will receive much improvement in the principal mysteries of our faith by the sensible instruction, which the observation of such solemnities yieldeth. The remembrance of the birth, the sufferings, the resurrection of Christ, the coming of the Holy Ghost, the conversion of the Gentiles by sending the apostles, the way made before his coming by the annunciation of the angel, and the coming of the Baptist, as it is a powerful mean to train the more ignorant sort in the understanding of such great mysteries, so it is a just occasion for all sorts to make that a particular time of serving God, upon which we solemnize those great works of his." *Bp. Sparrow.*

The Church has not appointed these following Epistles and Gospels, but upon special relation to the time wherein they are read. And it is admirable to see with what order and wisdom all things are disposed, that they might be the more suitable for putting us in mind of what we are about, or what we have to do. The whole year is distinguished into two parts; the one to commemorate Christ's living here on earth, and the other to direct us to live after his example. For the first are all the Sundays, appointed from Advent to Trinity Sunday: for the second, all the Sundays from Trinity to Advent again. And because the first part is conversant about the life of Christ, and the mysteries of his divine dispensation, therefore, beginning at Advent, is the memory of his incarnation celebrated; and after that, his nativity; then his circumcision; his manifestation to the Gentiles; his nonage; his doctrine; his miracles; his passion; his burial; his resurrection; his ascension; his sending of the Holy Ghost; all in the most perfect order: in all which we see the whole story and course of our Saviour in manifesting himself and his divine mysteries to the world. So that the Gospels, read through this part of the year, have their chief end and purpose, to make us know, and remember orderly with grateful hearts, what excellent benefits God the Father hath communicated to us, first by his Son, and then by his Holy Spirit; for which unspeakable goodness we fitly end this division of the year, with giving praise and glory to the whole blessed Trinity.

The second part, which contains all the Sundays after that till Advent, being for our guidance during our pilgrimage in this world, hath such Gospels in order ap-

the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou

pointed, as may most easily and plainly lead us in the true paths of Christianity: that those, which are regenerated by Christ, and initiated into his faith, may know what virtues to follow, and what vices to eschew. Thus, in the first part, we are to learn the mysteries of the Christian religion; and, in the second, to practise that which is agreeable to the same. For so it behoves us, not only to know, that we have no other foundation of our religion, but Christ Jesus, born, and crucified, and risen for us; but also to build upon this foundation such a life as he requires of us. And because the first part ends with Pentecost, the giving of a new law in our hearts, therefore the second part is to begin with the practice of that law: that as the children of Israel did pass the desert by the direction of Moses, so we may pass through this world by the guidance of our Saviour; and, overcoming at last our spiritual enemies, we may come to our heavenly dwelling place, and there remain with him for ever. *Bp. Overall.*

The Epistles, (for so the whole collection of them is commonly called, taking its denomination from the far greater part,) are portions of Scripture, chiefly consisting of moral precepts. Some few indeed must be excepted; which are either passages prophetical of our blessed Saviour, with regard to his first or second coming; or else historical, relating the memorable acts of the saints, whom the Church commemorates; or doctrinal, illustrating the ends and advantages of our Lord's actions or sufferings. Amongst those Epistles (strictly so called) some have a more immediate regard to questions of great importance, between the Jews and Christians, at the time when they were written. Yet are they not so confined to the controversies then depending, but that they, at the same time, help to explain many essential points and privileges of our religion: such as are highly necessary to be understood, and capable of bringing improvement to ours, and to all ages of the Church.

In the Gospels we are furnished with the strongest evidences of our faith. The mysteries of our Lord's incarnation and nativity, the miracles he wrought, the parables he spoke, the holy exhortations he has left us, whether in publick discourses to the multitudes, or in private conferences with his own disciples; the history of his life and death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the promises of his Holy Spirit, and predictions of the many wonderful things, which his followers, thus assisted, should be enabled to perform, in confirmation of the truth: these, upon the matter, make up the substance of this part of our service. Which gives us a perfect system for the establishment of our faith, as the Epistles have been observed to do, for the direction of our manners.

It were therefore heartily to be wished, that the excellency and usefulness of those Scriptures, chosen for the instruction and edification of our people, were more generally laid to heart: that men were duly sensible of the happiness of that communion, in which such effectual care is taken for their souls, that all who frequent our publick assemblies, are secure of being taught, even there, the whole of that, which is necessary to their salvation. And I hope I may take leave to recommend this (as I conceive) very reasonable instance of modesty and prudence, that such deference may be paid to the authority and wisdom of our governors, as for our flocks to make those passages of Scripture the subject of their private study and meditation, which have been judged most proper for their publick instruction. For, although our Church do, as indeed she ought, indulge the free use of the whole book of God to all her children, and as liberally impart unto them, in the course of daily lessons throughout the year; yet, since these passages are singled out for such times as are supposed to draw the greatest numbers together, this, methinks, is a fair intimation, and fit to be taken by the generality of people, that such portions of the Bible are not only of singular profit, when rightly understood; but that they are likewise best suited to the capacities of common men, and consequently, if attended to with diligence and honesty, in less danger of being misunderstood. *Dean Stanhope.*

The Epistles and Gospels are thought to have been at first selected by St. Jerome, and put into the Lectionary by him. It is certain that they were very anciently appropriated to the days whereon we now read them; since they are not only of general use throughout the whole Western church, but are also commented upon in the homilies of several ancient fathers, which are said to have been preached upon those very days, to which these portions of Scripture are now affixed. So that they have most of them belonged to the same Sundays and Holydays we now use them on, for above twelve hundred years; as I might easily shew also from several authorities.

In all the old Common Prayer-Books, except the Scotch one, the Epistles and Gospels were taken out of the Great Bible, neither of the two last translations being extant when the Common Prayer was first compiled. But in regard of the many defects which were observed in that version, and upon the petition of the Presbyterian commissioners at the Savoy conference, the commissioners on the Church side concluded that all the Epistles and Gospels should be used according to the last translation. *Wheatly.*

The following are the principal variations made at and since the Reformation.

Epistles and Gospels for	Variations made.
St. John's Day.	1 John i. 1. by Edward VI, instead of a Lesson out of Wisdom.
Sunday after Christmas.	Gosp. Matt. i. 1. by Edward VI, instead of Luke ii. In 1662 the Genealogies were left out.
Circumcision.	Epist. and Gosp. both changed by Edward VI.
Epiphany.	Epist. Eph. iii. 1. by Edward VI, instead of a passage out of Isaiah.
4 Sund. after Epiphany.	Epist. Rom. xiii. 1. by Edward VI: before, the same with the first Sunday in Advent.
6 Sund. after Epiphany.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, 1662.
Monday before Easter.	Epist. and Gosp. new by Edward VI, instead of an Apocryphal Lesson.
Wednesday before Easter.	Epist. Heb. ix. 16, by Edward VI, instead of a Lesson out of Leviticus.
Thursday before Easter.	Gosp. Luke xxiii. by Edward VI, instead of John xix.
Good Friday.	Gosp. John xix. Epist. Heb. ii. 1, by Edward VI, instead of portions out of Hosea and Exodus.
Easter Even.	Epist. and Gosp. both new by Edward VI, instead of two passages from the Old Testament.
25 Sunday after Trinity.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
St. Thomas's Day.	Epist. Ephes. ii. 19, by Edward VI.

shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof[g].

Epistles and Gospels for	Variations made.
St. Mark's Day.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
St. Philip and Jacob.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
St. James's Day.	Epist. Acts. xi. 27, by Edward VI.
St. Barnabas.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
St. Bartholomew.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
St. Matthew.	Epist. 2 Cor. iv. 1, by Edward VI.
St. Luke.	Epist. and Gosp. both new, Edward VI.
All Saints' Day.	Epist. Rev. vii. 2, by Edward VI.*

* There are some Epistles and Gospels which are not in the Lectionary, but were changed in the Roman Breviary for the better. The Reformers took these out of the Breviary, or rather the Missal; namely, the Gospels for St. Thomas, St. James, and All Saints' Days; the Epistle for St. Simon and Jude; both Epistles and Gospels for St. Paul, St. Matthias, and the Annunciation. *Dean Comber, Shepherd.*

[d] *—a Vigil or Eve.*] See note on the Table of Fasts, &c. at the beginning of the Common Prayer Book.

[e] *The first Sunday in Advent.*] For the greater solemnity of the three principal holydays, "Christmas-day, Easter-day," and "Whitsunday," the Church hath appointed certain days to attend them: some to go before, and others to come after them. Before "Christmas" are appointed four "Advent-Sundays," so called, because the design of them is to prepare us for a religious commemoration of the "Advent," or coming of Christ in the flesh. The Roman ritualists would have the celebration of this holy season to be apostolical, and that it was instituted by St. Peter. But the precise time of its institution is not so easily to be determined: though it certainly had its beginning before the year 450, because Maximus Taurinensis, who lived about that time, writ a homily upon it. And it is to be observed, that for the more strict and religious observation of this season, courses of sermons were formerly preached in several cathedrals on Wednesdays and Fridays, as is now the usual practice in Lent. And we find by the Salisbury Missal, that before the Reformation there was a special Epistle and Gospel relating to Christ's Advent, appointed for those days during all that time. *Wheatly.*

It should be observed here, that it is the peculiar computation of the Church, to begin her year, and to renew the annual course of her service, at this time of "Advent," therein differing from all other accounts of time whatsoever. The reason of which is, because she does not number her days, or measure her seasons, so much by the motion of the sun, as by the course of our Saviour; beginning and counting on her year with him, who, being the true "Sun of Righteousness," began now to rise upon the world, and, as "the Day-star on high," to enlighten them that sat in spiritual darkness. *Bp. Overall, Wheatly.*

The lessons and services therefore for the four first Sundays in her liturgical year propose to our meditations the two-fold Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ; teaching us that it is he, who was to come and did come, to redeem the world; and that it is he also, who shall come again, to be our Judge. The end proposed by the Church in setting these two appearances of Christ together before us, at this time, is to beget in our minds proper dispositions to celebrate the one and expect the other: that so with joy and thankfulness we may now "go to Bethlehem, and see this great thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us," even the Son of God, come to visit us in great humility: and thence, with faith unfeigned and hope immoveable, ascend in heart and mind to meet the same Son of God in the air, coming in glorious majesty to judge the quick and dead. *Bp. Horne.*

[f] *The Collect.*] The Collect appointed for the day, which is taken out of both the Epistle and the Gospel, and relates to both, puts us in mind of a double advent or coming of the Son of God: the one respects this life, when he came as a Saviour "to visit us in great humility;" the other respects the life to come when he shall come as a Judge "in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead." And to prepare us for both, the Church teaches us to pray this day for "grace, that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, that at the last day we may rise to the life immortal."

The Epistle for the day, out of which the Collect was taken, directs us to those graces of God's Holy Spirit, and acts of a good life, that are necessary to qualify and fit us to celebrate the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and to make us partakers of the benefit and joy of his appearance. *Dr. Hole.*

The Gospel acquaints us with his humble, yet triumphant entry into Jerusalem. It should seem at first perhaps more proper to Christ's passion than his birth: but it is read now principally for those words in it, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" that is, Blessed is he for coming in the flesh, the cause of all our joy, for which we can never say enough, "Hosannah in the highest." *Dr. Hole, Bp. Sparrow.*

[g] It is the drift and design of this Epistle, to induce us to lay aside all wicked and sinful practices, that unfit us for the coming of our Saviour; and to adorn ourselves with all those graces and virtues, that serve to qualify us

The Gospel. St. Matth. xxi. 1.

WHEN they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the fole of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them; and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David; Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple; and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves[h].

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for his Advent, and to prepare us for the great festival of his Nativity.

Let us then from hence learn, first, to "cast off all the works of darkness" which are put to shame and discomfited by the light. Let us avoid the nightworks of "rioting and drunkenness, of chambering and wantonness, of strife and envying," which cannot bear the light, but seek darkness and disguises to cover their foulness and deformity. The night of ignorance and persecution is now farther spent with us, than it was with these Romans, and we are better instructed in the evil and danger of all sinful courses; and therefore it will not become us to live any longer in them, for if we do, "this will be our condemnation that light is come into the world, and we love darkness rather than light, because our deeds are evil." Let us remember that it is beneath the dignity of a man or the simplicity and sincerity of a Christian, to do what he dares not own, and to covet masks and vizards to hide the deformity of his ways; especially on considering, that they will ere long be exposed before angels and men, to his eternal shame and confusion of face; which should make us hate all those things that hate the light.

Secondly, Let us "put on the armour of light," which will defend us from all shame and rebuke now, and at last bring us to the light of everlasting life. Let us have "our loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace;" that being thus armed we may be furnished with spiritual strength enough to vanquish all temptations, and to quench all the fiery darts of Satan; looking for the blessed hope and appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, especially now in the time of this mortal life, when the Son of God came to visit us in great humility, that we may be prepared for his second coming in his glorious Majesty, and from this mortal life may be translated to a blessed immortality; which God grant, for the merits of Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all glory and honour now and for evermore. *Dr. Hole.*

[h] The prophecy, alluded to in this Gospel, was delivered by Zechariah 500 years before the Advent of Christ. And St. Matthew affirmeth it to have had its accomplishment, when our Lord entered Jerusalem in the manner here described, amidst the acclamations of the attending multitude. The prediction was thus literally and most exactly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. No other king, with these characteristick marks about him, ever thus came to Sion before him; and, since the Jews rejected him, they have lost their temple, their city, and their country; nor has there been any Sion to which their King might come. Jerusalem would not rejoice on the day, when the prophet had injoined her to rejoice, and therefore she has had cause to mourn from that day to this.

The second Sunday in Advent[1].

The Collect.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to
Rom. xv. 4. be written for our learning; Grant
Luke viii. 18. Acts xvii. 11. that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly
Luke viii. 15. digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the
Rom. xv. 13. Heb. vi. 20. blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The Epistle. Rom. xv. 4.

WHATSOEVER things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind, and one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one

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From this passage it appears that religion hath its joys: a prophet calleth us to exult and shout: and often as this holy season returneth, the Church secondeth the call. Her services dispel the gloom of melancholy, and put gladness into the hearts of all her children. They are wonderfully calculated to renew good impressions in our minds, to increase our faith, to invigorate our hope, to blow up the sacred fires of devotion and charity, and to fill us with holy and heavenly tempers. They produce a joy, "which no man taketh from us," and in which "a stranger intermeddleth not:" they inspire a pleasure, which no pain can overcome, of which no time can deprive us, and which death will perfect and insure to us for ever. Perverse Jerusalem rejected joy, and chose sorrow for her portion. Glad tidings came to the Gentiles, and were gladly received. The Christian church, formed of them, is now the daughter of Sion, and the new Jerusalem. To her the promises are transferred and made good. She therefore obeyeth the prophet's injunction: she continually, with the holy virgin, "magnifieth the Lord, and her spirit rejoiceth in God her Saviour." *Bp. Horne.*

The impressions, most useful to be left on the reader's mind by this narrative, are such as regard the future coming of our Lord, prefigured by that of this day's Gospel. And in this type we all shall find subject for our imitation. These multitudes came out to meet Jesus riding on an ass; but the same Jesus shall one day "make the clouds his chariot, and ride upon the heavens as it were upon an horse." Ps. civ. 3; lxviii. 4. They sang the praises of the Son of David to a city, who would not receive him as such; but he, who hath already demonstrated himself to be that promised "Son of David," shall then come to convince the unbelieving world, that he is the very "Son of God." And we, like them, should all go forth to meet him: like them, I say, with the sincerity of disciples, with the innocence of children. Let us, like them, cut down the "branches" from our trees; those worldly vanities and carnal affections, which, like luxuriant boughs, must be lopped off, and cast under the feet of this heavenly King, by stooping to his holy discipline. Let us too "spread" our hearts, as "they their garments;" that every faculty, and every thought, may be subject to his dominion; and labour to adorn the body of this mystical Head, the church and doctrine of Christ. So shall this clothing of flesh, which must shortly be put off, be resumed again with joy; and, from a "vessel of honour and sanctification here," become his attendant and companion "into the heavenly Jerusalem." So shall we be qualified to bear our part, in the most exalted sense of these hymns and acclamations; and, in that day of salvation, shout forth with gladness and thanksgiving unspeakable, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." Yea, blessed be he that cometh, not to suffer, but to reign; not to redeem, but to recompense. Hosannah to the meek Son of David! Hosannah to the glorious majesty of the Son of God! Blessed be the kingdom, which is come to rule our hearts by grace! Blessed be the kingdom that cometh to reward our obedience with glory. "Blessed be our peace, who died unto sin once! Blessed be our righteousness, who liveth for ever unto God." Eph. ii. 14. Rom. vi. 10. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. 1 Cor. i. 30. "Hosannah" to him, who came to Jerusalem, to be judged in great humility! Hosannah to him, who cometh with terrible pomp to judge both the quick and the dead. "Hosannah in the highest." *Dean Stanhope.*

[1] *The second Sunday in Advent.*] The Church, to prepare us farther for Christ's coming in the flesh, sends us this day, as Christ did the Pharisees, to the holy Scriptures, "for they are they that testify of him:" all the prophecies and promises concerning him being recorded there for our benefit. The Collect for the day reminds us, that God hath "caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning," and teaches us to pray that we may receive and use them aright. The Epistle, out of which the Collect was taken, tells us likewise in the beginning, that "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning," that is, that the history and prophecies of old, as well as the latter precepts or promises, were all designed for our instruction, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The Gospel treats of Christ's second coming to judgment: an excellent preparative for the approaching commemoration of his first coming. *Dr. Hole.*

another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy Name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost[j].

The Gospel. St. Luke xxi. 25.

AND there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon; and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable, Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled: heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away[k].

[j] The ends, for which St. Paul in this passage says the Scriptures were designed, are an excellent direction how to judge of our improvement by reading and hearing the word of God. He tells us, that the proofs to be produced of it are "patience," and "comfort," and "hope." Would a man then demonstrate that he hath profited by the Scriptures? Let him apply to himself these proofs. Hath he learned meekness and moderation to them who differ from him? Does he see the ignorance and infirmities of "weaker" Christians with temper and compassion; and, instead of censuring and despising, labour to inform them better, and gain upon their affections by methods of gentleness, and all becoming condescensions? Can he bear the reproaches of them who are in the wrong, when he knows himself in the right? Can he put up injuries for God's sake, and quietly submit to affliction, when Providence lays it upon him? Does he support himself in hardships and temptations, under calumny and causeless contradiction, by the example of a suffering Saviour, and those other bright patterns of meekness and perseverance, whose trials and praises are recorded in those books? Does he labour diligently for peace and order, charity and godly unity? This, if he does, he is instructed, and mighty in the Scriptures, indeed. But till the virtues, commemorated and commanded there, are copied out into his disposition and practice, "though he understand all mysteries and all knowledge," 1 Cor. xiii. 2, viii. 2, yet this apostle tells him roundly, that all this while "he is nothing," and "knows nothing, as he ought to know." *Dean Stanhope.*

[k] In its primary acceptation this prophecy relates to the destruction of Jerusalem. But the forms of expression and the images are for the most part applicable also to the day of judgment; and an allusion to that great event, as a kind of secondary object, runs through it. This is a very common practice in the prophetick writings, where two subjects are frequently carried on together. Thus our Saviour here holds out the destruction of Jerusalem, as a type of the dissolution of the world: giving thereby at the same time a most interesting admonition to his immediate hearers the Jews, and a most awful lesson to all his future disciples: so that the benefit of his predictions, instead of being confined to one occasion or to one people, is by this admirable management extended to every subsequent period of time, and to the whole Christian world. *Bp. Porteus.* As the former prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, so will the latter be fulfilled at the general day of judgment, of which Jerusalem's visitation was a type. How will the glory and terrour of that day dazzle the

The third Sunday in Advent[l].

The Collect.

O Lord Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries[m] may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

The Epistle. 1 Cor. iv. 1.

LET a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgement: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God[n].

The Gospel. St. Matth. xi. 2.

NOW when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ,

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yes and terrify the hearts of all the enemies of Christ! ow will it delight the eyes and rejoice the hearts of all hat love and fear him, that serve and obey him! Then deed, when the "hearts" of wicked "men shall be failing em for fear," then may the righteous "look up and t up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh." urkitt.

[l] *The third Sunday in Advent.*] The Collect for this ay, adverting again to the first coming of Christ in the esh, and to his second coming to judgment, reminds us, hat, as there was a messenger to prepare his way for the one, so also there are ministers and stewards to make ready his way for the other: and furnishes us with a prayer, that as the former faithfully discharged his office at Christ's first coming, so the latter may perform theirs by way of preparation for his second. Who that first messenger was; and who the ministers and stewards now are, and how they are to perform their office in preparing the way of the Lord; the Epistle informs us as to the latter point, and the Gospel as to the former. *Dr. Hole.*

[m] —*the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries,*] See 1 Cor. iv. 1. The mysteries of God are those counsels of the divine will concerning the salvation of lost mankind, which were kept wholly secret from the far greater part of the world, and discovered only in a small measure even to the Jews; but are now fully made known to all mankind by the apostles and other preachers of the Gospel, who are therefore called "the stewards" of them, because they are intrusted with them by God, and distribute and disperse the knowledge of them. *Dr. Bennet.*

[n] From this day's Epistle we may learn, 1. Who are the officers appointed to make ready the way for Christ's coming to judgment; namely, the ministers and stewards of his holy mysteries, who are therefore to be received and respected accordingly. We are here bid so to "account of them as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God;" and so to think them worthy of double honour, as well for his sake to whom they belong, as for the work's sake about which they are employed. Their calling is the highest upon earth, their employment the noblest, and their message the most honourable; they are the ambassadors of Christ, sent to treat with men about their everlasting peace and salvation. And as a prince reckons himself honoured, or affronted, in the good or bad usage of his ambassadors, so Christ accounts himself respected or despised in the good or ill treatment of his ministers: and therefore the apostle gives a strict charge to all people, to "know them that are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake;" 1 Thess. v. 13. And the author to the Hebrews exhorts us to "obey them that have the rule over us in the Lord, and submit ourselves, for they watch for our souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Heb. xiii. 17.

2. If Christ's ministers are to make the way ready for his second coming, then we may learn hence to hearken to them, and receive their message; the words they deliver are from God, and therefore to be received with all reverence and veneration, and to be counted worthy of all acceptation. As the ministers and stewards of God's house are to be faithful in delivering their Master's will, so are the people to be careful of receiving and observing it: "he that heareth you," saith Christ, "heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." Luke x. 16. And dreadful will be the doom of all such, who shall be found despisers of God, and of Christ. *Dr. Hole.*

he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them: And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me. And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee[o].

[o] From the method here taken by the Baptist, to satisfy his disciples that Jesus was the Christ, we may observe what sort of evidence the Christian religion stands upon. Miracles, done frequently, publickly, before unbelievers, before enemies, men who could not deny, and yet would have been glad with all their hearts to find any flaw in them, any shelter for their infidelity. These carried in them a sufficient conviction. But to whom? To all who would attend to them, who would compare prophecies and events, and acknowledge him for the Messias, in whom these two concurred. But even these did not pretend to bear down prejudice and passion, peevish and resolute perverseness. Blessed are they that are not offended; because they submit to that proof, which Almighty God hath given of his truth, and are content to hearken to reason, in despite of all the solicitations of the world, and corrupt nature, to the contrary. But still "offended" many will be. Religion will always be spoken against; and the rock, on which our hopes are built, will continue "a stone of stumbling to the unbelieving and disobedient." 1 Pet. ii. 8. And since we have fair warning that thus it will be, this ought not to unsettle us in our principles, but rather to confirm us in the belief of a Gospel, the truth of which is manifest, even in this particular too. It should awaken our care and circumspection, that, while so many are ready to despise and take offence at Christ and his word, we be not found among them, that contribute to, or give just occasion for it. No, rather let us labour by a more vigorous zeal for God, and unwearied perseverance in well-doing, to put to silence the ignorance and malice of foolish and gainsaying men.

2. Secondly, It may not be unseasonable upon this occasion, to observe the season proper for miracles. They are necessary to establish new doctrines, and to convert unbelievers: but, when alleged for doctrines sufficiently established already; when wrought or boasted of, only among people already possessed with a belief of the points they are made to countenance; when in a manner that seems to fear the being observed, or detected rather, by those of a contrary persuasion; they are then quite out of proper time and place, and do not create faith, so much as suspicion and fraud. Our Lord proved the force of his miracles, by shewing their agreement with the predictions, that such should be wrought by the Messias. But the same Lord hath warned us, that "in the last days" there shall be "lying wonders;" Matt. xxiv. 24, 26; and therefore we have reason to believe, that the pretended workers of them in those days are "false prophets and false Christs." So great a difference there is between the miracles of Christ, which were foretold on purpose that men might believe and be saved by them; and those wonders of a more modern date, which were foretold on purpose that men might not believe, and be seduced by them.

3. Lastly, When St. John Baptist here is said to "prepare the way of the Lord before him," we should do well to recollect wherein that preparation consisted. And every one in his station, but especially the ministers of the Gospel, who are messengers sent express upon this errand, should be careful to make ready the way to his second, as that harbinger did for his first, coming. For the preparations are in both cases the same; making guilty people sensible of their sins, reproving open wickedness, unmasking hypocrisy, beating down spiritual pride; importuning men to repentance, by representing, with a faithful zeal, the horrible mischiefs and dreadful conclusion of a wicked course of life, and the terrors of that Master, who, at his coming to purge the floor, will not fail to separate most nicely between the wheat and the chaff, and burn the latter with unquenchable fire. We shall do well to take the Baptist for an example of our conduct too, in giving weight to our doctrines by a life of severe virtue, by boldly rebuking vice, even in the greatest, when duty and a fit opportunity call us to it; and, if by this we fall under their displeasure, suffering with a constancy like his; and, even by our deaths, bearing testimony to God and his truth. These things, duly attended to, would make a mighty change, even in a profligate and profane world. And, as it is our duty (ours especially who are ministers of Christ) to pursue them vigorously: so the blessed effects of reforming mankind are so very many, so very great, as to deserve our daily fervent prayers, that God would promote and succeed the good work. And this our Church hath taught us to recommend very pertinently to the divine favour and assistance in the Collect for this day. *Dean Stanhope.*

The fourth Sunday in Advent[p].

The Collect.

O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power[q], and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

Ps. lxxx. 2. 2 Tim. i. 7. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Eph. vi. 10.

Heb. xii. 1. Ps. cxix. 32.

The Epistle. Phil. iv. 4.

REJOICE in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus[r].

The Gospel. St. John i. 19.

THIS is the record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art

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[p] *The fourth Sunday in Advent.*] This day being the Sunday immediately preceding the Nativity of our Lord, the Church calls upon us to expect him with joy and to meet him with exultation. The Collect for the day prays God to afford us the powerful assistance of his grace; that we may not be retarded by the weight of our sins, but may run with patience the race that is set before us. The Epistle recommends to us several Christian graces, very suitable to the near approach of so great a solemnity; namely, joy, moderation, trust, thanksgiving, and prayer: to all which is added the gracious promise of God's blessing upon those who cultivate them. The Gospel gives us a further account of St. John the Baptist, in the discharge of his office as our Lord's harbinger, and in the witness which he bore to him. *Dr. Hole, Dr. Nicholls.*

[q] —*raise up thy power,*] God is there said to "raise" or "stir up his power," when he exerts and shews it in a remarkable manner. See Ps. lxxx. 2; Deut. xxxiii. 2. *Dr. Bennet.*

[r] By "the peace of God" in this passage some suppose to be meant the reconciliation made with mankind in our blessed Saviour; a mystery far exceeding the comprehension, not of human only, but of all created and finite understandings. But the sense most apposite to the apostle's purpose seems to be, not only that peace, considered in itself, but a comfortable sense of, and firm persuasion, that we have a share in it; and that this will, even under the worst treatment, and heaviest afflictions, preserve the mind seriously affected with it, in such a state of undisturbed tranquillity as is not possible for any to conceive, whom their own happy experience hath not convinced. This sense seems to be much favoured by the just importance of that original word, which our translators render "keep." A military term, proper to garrisons; and intimating, that this inward peace is a strong guard, and impregnable defence, against all the tumults and tempests of a boisterous and uncertain world: such as will neither suffer our "hearts" to be overpowered, that is, our affections vitiated by immoderate fears, or hopes, or desires of earthly objects; nor our "minds" to be captivated, that is, our understanding and judgment to be imposed upon by false notions of temporal good or evil; but will set us above the world, and support and entertain us with spiritual consolations, the continual feast of a good conscience at present, and the prospect of bliss unspeakable and immortal afterwards.

And as this steady composure and serenity of mind may be applied to all the duties, recommended in the Epistle of this day, as their effect and reward: so it is immediately annexed, and seems in a special manner to belong to that of a devout and thankful application to God by prayer. Most seasonable therefore and wise is the use, which our excellent mother, the Church, makes of these words; in dismissing her children after the most solemn acts of worship, with this passage of St. Paul, in form of a blessing; imploring, that what he foretels and promises here, may be made good to the whole congregation. Most properly does she regard the distinction generally observed here between the "heart" and "mind," by begging that her children and members may be kept in the "knowledge and love of God," and "of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord:" and most reasonably may it be expected, that this benediction will avail, since the nearer we approach to God our Saviour, by a spiritual communion in prayers and sacraments, and all other holy ordinances, the better we shall know him; and the better we know him, the more we shall be sure to love him: and were that love entire, did he but reign in, and possess our hearts without a rival; we should then feel the best sense of that passage verified to the utmost, in a spiritual regard, and in our own particular case, that "the work of righteousness is peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." *Dean Stanhope.*

thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not: He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing[s].

The Nativity of our Lord[t], *or the Birth-day of CHRIST, commonly called Christmas-day*[u].

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, John iii. 16. i. 14. 1 John iv. 9. Heb. ii. 16.

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[s] "This record of John" is well worthy of attention particularly upon two accounts.

1. As it relates to himself, it sets him before us as an excellent pattern of true humility. To those questions of the Jews, which had a tendency to advance him in honour and esteem with the people, he returns answers in negatives so direct and plain, as would admit of no ambiguity, no doubt at all. To those which concern his true character he is content with such replies, as refer to a past prophecy concerning himself, and leave them to draw the consequences. The glorious things, spoken of John elsewhere, he might, without any breach of truth, have declared to those Jews of himself; but that eminent messenger, sent to prepare the way of the Lord, that figurative Elias, who came in the spirit and power of the Tishbite, that "prophet and more than a prophet," that excellent person, than whom "there had not risen a greater among them that are born of women," describes himself only in the character of a "voice crying in the wilderness;" the lowest of all the characters, by which the ancient prophets had represented him.

2. The testimony, which he bore to our blessed Lord, is conceived in terms so respectful and magnificent, that, whilst it still farther shews his humility by precluding all comparison between Jesus and him, it seems also to contain a clear intimation of our blessed Lord's divine nature and excellencies. "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." For what excellencies, less than divine, could justify that awful distance they express, between so eminent a person, and the holy Jesus? They are not words of compliment and form, but of strict truth and equity. And yet it will be very hard to understand them so, if the comparison be stated, only between one prophet and another, only between the prince and so venerable a harbinger: in short, if we understand them any otherwise, than thus, that even he that "was "more than a prophet," and "than whom there had not risen a greater ever born of women," Matt. xi. 9, 11, was notwithstanding so many degrees inferior to him, whose way he came to prepare, because he was so the son of a woman, as to be more than man: the Son of God, and himself very God. And thus considered, the passage, now before us, is so far from an affected strain of depressing himself, and magnifying his Master; that, could St. John have found any terms yet more lowly, they were still all far less than were due to that infinite distance, that essential greatness, between which, and the most exalted of all its creatures, there is no comparison, nay not any manner of proportion, upon which a comparison may be founded. *Dean Stanhope.*

[t] *The Nativity of our Lord.*] This feast of our Saviour's nativity seems to have had its beginning in the first, or at least in very early, times of Christianity. We have no certain evidence of the exact time when it was first observed, yet it appears plainly to have been very early received all over the West. And the immemorial observation of it is an argument of its primitive institution. *Dr. Nicholls, Nelson.*

And that no one may want an opportunity to celebrate so great a festival with a suitable solemnity, the Church both excites and assists our devotion, by an admirable frame of office fitted to the day. In the first Lessons she reads to us the clearest prophecies of Christ's coming in the flesh; and in the second Lessons, Epistle, and Gospel, shews us the completion of those prophecies, by giving us the entire history of it. In the Collect she teaches us to pray, that we may be partakers of the benefit of his birth, and in the proper Psalms she sets us to our duty of praising and glorifying God for this incomprehensible mystery. *Wheatly.*

[u] *—commonly called Christmas-day.*] Mass was a word for festival, of Saxon origin, whence our Christmas: retained also in Candlemas, Martinmas, Michaelmas, &c. *Todd.*

On this festival we commemorate the incarnation of the Son of God, that great mystery of godliness, the prime pillar of our religion, and the firm foundation of all our hopes and expectations. *Dr. Hole.* The Collect reminds us of the Son of God having taken upon him our

and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Luke i. 27. Matt. i. 25. John i. 12, 13. iii. 3. Tit. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 15. 1 Pet. i. 23. Gal. iv. 5. Tim. iii. 5. Eph. iv. 23.

The Epistle. Heb. i. 1.

GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail[x].

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nature, and been born of a pure Virgin; and teaches us to pray, that we, having been born again in our baptism into a spiritual life, and received the adoption of sons, may daily be renewed in the spirit of our minds, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. *Dr. Nicholls.*

The Epistle for the day acquaints us, 1. with one great end and office of Christ's incarnation; namely, to reveal to us the mind and will of his Father, which he did more fully and clearly than had been done by any or all of the prophets before. 2. It sets forth the high dignity and greatness of his person, being equal in glory and greatness to the Father, from whom he came, ver. 3. 3. It shews us his exceeding great preeminence above the angels in sundry instances and particulars; from the fourth to the tenth verse. 4. It concludes with the eternity of his duration, shewing it to be before the worlds, which he made by his power; and that he will be after them when all things will be destroyed.

The Gospel represents him to us both in his divine and human nature: by the one he is equal with God, by the other he is made like unto men. Both of these are mentioned by St. Paul, Phil. ii. 6, 7: and are more largely set forth in this Gospel. As he is God, he is styled here "the Word, the Life, and the Light of the world;" which glorious titles are given to him in a way peculiar to him, and not to be affirmed of any other. As he his man, he is said to be "made flesh, and to dwell among us;" the Gospel begins with the one, and ends with the other. *Dr. Hole.*

This was called in the first of Edward VI, "The second communion;" for there was another before it: the one to set forth his nativity of the blessed Virgin Mary, for which the Epistle was Titus, ii, the Gospel, St. Luke, ii; the other, to set forth his eternal generation, which is that now continued by us, following the alteration made in the fifth of Edward VI. In the Church of Rome, and here in England aforetimes, they had three masses or services of communion upon that day, whereof this is the last. *Bp. Cosins.*

[x] It was the object of the apostle in this chapter to prove the just preeminence of the Christian dispensation above any other, by insisting especially upon the excellence of the person, by whom this revelation was imparted to us. "God spake in times past to our fathers by the pro-

The Gospel. St. John i. 1.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth[r].

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phets;" but "to us in these last days he hath spoken by his Son." He therefore goes on to prove the dignity of this last messenger to be so far superior to that of any other, as to admit of no likeness, no comparison between them: that he hath excellencies peculiar to himself, and such as are communicable, not only to none, no not the best of the sons of men; but to none, no not the noblest creatures, of any other kind. In a word, that he is of a nature truly divine, of the same essence and eternity with God the Father; and his Son, in a manner and sense so proper and particular, as no other, however called such in Scripture, is, or must be understood to be.

The result is that the Gospel claims a just pre-eminence above any other revelation of God's will to mankind; because, not only the first and remote declarer, but the immediate publisher and dispenser of it, was a person truly and strictly divine. So that when God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets, it was by men, who in all points (their particular inspiration excepted) stood upon a level with those they spoke to: but when he spoke to us by his Son, he spoke by himself, and without the ceremony of an inferior messenger. An honour and advantage this to us, a kindness and condescension in him, which at all times deserves to be considered: but, at this festival especially, should be remembered with the most zealous expressions of wonder and praise. *Dean Stanhope.*

The condition of the Person, whose nativity we this day celebrate, is of the greatest consideration. For he, that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty and a world of inconvenience, is "the Son of the living God," of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars: he is God eternal. He is also, by reason of the personal union of the divinity with his human nature, the Son of God; not by adoption, as good men and beatified angels are; but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is "the heir" of his Father's glories and possessions; not by succession, for his Father cannot die; but by an equality of communication. He is "the express image of his Father's Person" according to both natures: the miracle and excess of his Godhead being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity. And after all this, he is our "Saviour," that to our duties of wonder and adoration we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. Here then are concentred, in a mysterious and incomprehensible manner, the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility: if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated in a station of love and essential felicity: and in the manger, where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicity to us. As he is God, his name is in heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is man, he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is seated upon a super-exalted throne: as man, exposed to the lowest state of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory, at the same instant when we may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle bands. As God, he is incircled with millions of angels: as man in the company of beasts. As God, he is the eternal Word of the Father, eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient, and without need: and yet he submitted himself to a condition imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous. And this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws: that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason and our passions and capacities upon that saying of St. Paul, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed," 1 Cor. xvi. 22. *Bp. Jeremy Taylor.*

[r] From the representation which this day's Gospel

Saint Stephen's Day[z].

The Collect.

GRANT, O Lord, that, in all our sufferings here upon earth for
1 Pet. iv. 19. the testimony of thy truth, we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by
Heb. xii. 1, 2. Rom. viii. 18. xii. 14. Matt. v. 44.
faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and, being filled with the holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors by the example

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contains of "the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. iii. 16, many duties result. 1. Let us admire and adore the infinite love and goodness of God in this astonishing condescension, that he, who was one with the Father, and of the same divine nature with him, should stoop so low as to assume our human nature, with all its weaknesses and infirmities, for us men and for our salvation. 2. Let us contemplate the infinite power and unsearchable riches of divine wisdom in this transaction; that God should find out a way to reconcile sinners to himself by his Son's taking upon him sinful flesh, and thereby giving satisfaction in the same nature that offended; by which means justice and mercy met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. 3. From the Word's having been made flesh and having dwelt among us, let us learn to preserve our nature more pure and undefiled from fleshly lusts, considering how highly that nature has been honoured by an union with the Godhead. Lastly, let us celebrate this mysterious union of our nature with his in that holy sacrament of Christ's body and blood, ordained on purpose for a memorial of it. The Word was made flesh *that he* might make us partakers of his Holy Spirit, which *is* conveyed to us in that holy feast appointed for that end; there we may spiritually behold that flesh torn, and that blood poured out, which he assumed merely to make our peace; and shall we refuse to remember and rejoice in that atonement? Rather let us take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, who thus humbled himself for our exaltation; let us compass his altar with praises and thanksgivings, and offer ourselves to him, who thus freely offered and united himself to us; that, being made one with him, we may for ever dwell in him, and he in us. Amen. *Dr. Hole.*

[z] *St. Stephen's day.*] Immediately after Christmas follow, as attendants upon this high festival, St. Stephen, St. John, and Innocents; not because this was the very time of their suffering, but because none are thought fitter attendants on Christ's nativity, than the blessed martyrs, who have laid down their lives for him, from whose birth they received spiritual life. And there being three kinds of martyrdom; 1. "In will and deed," which is the highest. 2. "In will," but "not in deed." 3. "In deed," but "not in will:" in this order they attend. St. Stephen first, who suffered both in will and deed. Next St. John, who suffered martyrdom in will, but not in deed, being miraculously delivered out of the boiling cauldron, into which he was put before Port-Latin in Rome. Lastly, the holy Innocents, who suffered in deed, but not in will; yet are reckoned amongst the martyrs, because they suffered for Christ: whose praise these his witnesses confessed, and shewed forth not in speaking, but in dying. See the Collect for the day. *Bp. Sparrow.*

As the interests of religion and virtue require, that due regard be paid to the memory of pious and good persons; and as they, who have laid down their lives for God and their duty, have given the strongest proofs of attachment to the noblest cause; so the Christian church hath, from the beginning, shewn distinguished honours to those professors of its holy faith, who have sealed their testimony to it with their blood. The first martyr, or witness, of this kind, after the blessed Jesus himself, was St. Stephen, a man "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, and of power, and of wisdom," Acts vi. 3, 5, 8, 10: whose death is related in Acts vii. 59, 60. And we find in the next verse but one, that "devout men carried him," with decent solemnity, "to his burial," and made great "lamentation over him;" undoubtedly mixed with equal triumph, that he had finished his course in so exemplary a manner: nor were they withheld from it by fear of the resentment, to which so publick an instance of respect must provoke his murderers and all their adherents. Two of the most ancient monuments of ecclesiastical history, that we have, excepting the New Testament, are the accounts of the martyrdom of Ignatius and Polycarp, both disciples of St. John, written at the time of their suffering by the churches of Antioch and Smyrna, of which they were bishops. And in those they mention, as of course, their purpose of celebrating yearly the festival of their birth-days, of their entrance into a better life, for the commemoration of their excellent graces, and the incitement of others to imitate them. Thus did they provide, that "the righteous should be had in everlasting remembrance," Ps. cxii. 6; and observed the more particular direction, given to that intent in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Remember them, which have (had) the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end," the event, "of their conversation," Heb. xiii. 7. The rest of the primitive churches appear to have followed the same rule; and each to have honoured the more eminent of their own martyrs, who had been usually their teachers also, by anniversary assemblies for preserving the reverence due to their characters, and offering up thanks to God for their examples.

But the increase of their numbers, and the adoption of the sufferers of one church into the liturgies of another, and the admission of eminently good persons, who had "not resisted unto blood," Heb. xii. 4, and the frequent grants, which in subsequent ages were made, of so high a distinction, with little care of previous inquiry, multiplied the returns of these solemnities very improperly and inconveniently. Then besides, a still greater evil was, that praises and panegyrics too soon grew to be immoderate, and afterwards impious. In the vehemence of national encomiums and exclamations, the saint was called upon as present, until at length he was thought so: and what at first was merely a bold and moving figure of speech, became at length in good earnest a prayer: which requested of a dead man, who was not able to hear it, not only that he would intercede with God in behalf of his fellow servants, but that he would

of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Acts vii. 55, 56, 60.

Heb. ii. 18.

¶ *Then shall follow the Collect of the Nativity, which shall be said continually unto New-year's Eve.*

For the Epistle. Acts vii. 55.

STEPHEN, being full of the holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep[a].

himself bestow such blessings upon them, as no creature hath in his power. Things being found in this condition at the Reformation, it was necessary both to abolish intirely these unlawful addresses, and to limit the original sort of commemorations to a moderate list of persons, indisputably worthy of them. Accordingly no day is appointed by our Church for the celebration of any other, than the principal saints mentioned in the New Testament, it being hard to stop, if more were added. And amongst these, St. Stephen is the only one, who stands solely on the foot of being a martyr: as indeed it was fit, that the foremost, the leader, of that "noble army" should be distinguished, and chosen, as it were, to represent the rest. *Abp. Secker.*

St. Stephen, whose festival is this day celebrated, was an early proselyte to Christianity, and a man of singular holiness, being described to be "a man full of the Holy Ghost," Acts vi. 5. He was the first person chosen by the apostles into the then new-erected office of deacons. He was brought before the sanhedrim, or Jewish council, for preaching that the Jewish economy should be abrogated, and the temple destroyed, Acts vi. 14. But Stephen vindicating his doctrine, by several passages of the Old Testament, and making therefrom some reflexions on the cruel and persecuting temper of the Jews; they outrageously carried him out of the city and stoned him, Acts vii. 58. I do not find exactly how ancient the celebration of the festival of St. Stephen is; it was probably observed in St. Chrysostom's time, who has several homilies upon his memory, which may be thought to be preached upon this festival, in one of which he calls him the top of the martyrs, the Stephanos, or crown of the church. In the second homily he calls him the "glory of the church," the "champion of religion," the "leader up of the martyrs." Gregory Nazianzen, in another oration upon him, calls him the "Great Stephen, whose temples were bound with the first crown of martyrdom." *Dr. Nicholls.*

Of the Collect for this day it may be particularly noted, that, as the Church offers up some of her Collects directly to the second Person of the Trinity, so one of them is this for St. Stephen's day, and very properly: for as St. Stephen in the midst of his martyrdom prayed to Jesus, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" so the Church, in imitation of this blessed proto-martyr, upon his day calls upon the Lord Jesus also, desiring of him such a spirit as that of St. Stephen, to love and pray for our enemies, which is that heroical and transcendent virtue, which is peculiar to the Christian religion. *Bp. Sparrow.*

The Collect reminds us both of the sufferings and the virtues of St. Stephen. The Epistle, out of which the Collect was taken, calls the same things to our remembrance and imitation. The Gospel, which contains our Saviour's prophecy of the sad fate and destruction of Jerusalem, acquaints us with many more that drank of St. Stephen's bitter cup, and were put to death by stoning; which occasioned the Church's selection of this portion of Scripture to be read on this day; in which we are told of Jerusalem's killing the prophets, and stoning them that were sent to it, and of the sad consequences that ensued thereupon; for it brought that utter ruin and destruction upon the city, as not to have one stone left upon another. *Dr. Hole.*

[a] In the circumstances of the heroick action here described, it is easy to discover a variety of matter, conducing much to the honour of the saint now commemorated, and to the edification of every pious Christian.

1. We have here the great mercy and goodness of God, in vouchsafing to St. Stephen such extraordinary measures of his grace, such a comfortable and delightful prospect of the glories of heaven, to sustain and fortify him, in the conflicts of his approaching death, for the sake of his blessed Son. And this is contained in the 55th and 56th verses.

2. We have likewise the stedfastness and vigour of St. Stephen's faith, in committing his soul to Jesus, at his last minutes: Acts vii. 59: an action, which does evidently imply a firm belief, (1.) That his soul was a substance distinct from his body; (2.) That it should not die with, but continue to exist when separated from, the body; (3.) That the same Jesus, whom he had acknowledged to be very

The Gospel. St. Matth. xxiii. 34.

BEHOLD, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord[b].

Saint John the Evangelist's Day[c].

The Collect.

MERCIFUL Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it John i. 4. viii. 12. Eph. v. 14. 1 John i. 5, 6, 7.

man, is likewise very God: one able to hear and grant this prayer, and to preserve the souls commended to his protection and care. And, (4.) That the spirits received by him, are in a state of safety and happiness.

3. Here is an admirable pattern of meekness and charity; ver. 60; of tender compassion for them, who have none for us; and of forgiving our bitterest and most bloody enemies; even then, when, if ever, our angry resentments might seem allowable. For all this is the result of St. Stephen's praying, that the guilt of his death might not be charged to the men, who most wrongfully inflicted it: doing this, at the very instant of their executing their malice, and adding to his agonies: and persevering in this invincible charity to his last breath, as if God's mercy to these hardened wretches were the thing, which, of all others, he was most concerned to intreat, with the dying accents of a tongue to speak no more. Thus not only imitating that blessed Lord, for whom he was content to be so barbarously murdered, but, by his example, confirming the truth of St. Paul's assertion, that, "though a man have all faith, so that he could remove mountains, and though he give his body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth him nothing." 1 Cor. viii. 2, 3.

If we hope in earnest to attain St. Stephen's happiness, we should rather make his virtues than his vision our pattern; and provided we have but the former, the matter is not great if God do not allow us the latter. Let us therefore make the right improvement of having this eminent saint in remembrance, and endeavour, as well as pray, that our minds may be brought to his holy frame. So that in all our afflictions, but especially in any to which it shall please God to call us for "the testimony of his truth, we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory which shall be revealed; and, being filled with the Holy Ghost," whose necessary graces are never wanting to any who diligently seek and use them, "may" attain to that eminent instance of charity, to "love and bless our persecutors." Thus shall we find the help and favour of him "who standeth at the right hand of God, to succour all them who suffer for him;" and who, if not appointed to suffer for, yet do their utmost to live and die in, his true faith and fear, the "blessed Jesus, our only mediator and advocate." *Dean Stanhope.*

[b] We have here a prediction concerning the Jews, and a severe denunciation upon them. 1. A prediction, foretelling what cruel usage they should inflict upon the first disciples and apostles of Christ, killing and crucifying some, scourging and stoning others: which accordingly was fulfilled in the stoning of St. Stephen, the crucifying of St. Peter, the scourging of St. Paul, and the putting of St. James to death with the sword. 2. A severe denunciation, that upon them should come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from Abel to Zacharias, the last prophet, whose murder is mentioned by name in the Old Testament, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20. These words are to be understood, not as if the intent of Christ's sending the prophets was that the Jews might put them to death; but that this would be the consequence of their being sent. Our Lord concludes with a pathetick lamentation over Jerusalem, expressive of his vehement affection towards them, and the sincerity of his desire for their salvation: so that we are at a loss whether more to admire, his great kindness and compassion to the Jews in general, and to Jerusalem in particular; or the amazing obstinacy and wilfulness of this people in rejecting so great favour, condescension, and kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I would have gathered you," said Christ, "but ye would not:" and so their "house was left unto them desolate," an alarming proof, how wholly the ruin and destruction of sinners is chargeable on their own wilfulness and obstinacy; and how deplorably and inexcusably they will perish, who perish by their own wilfulness under the Gospel. *Burkitt.*

[c] *St. John the Evangelist's day.*] St. John the Evangelist was by birth a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and

being enlightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

John xxi. 24. John xii. 35. Rom. xiii. 13. Eph. v. 8. John viii. 32. Col. i. 12.

The Epistle. 1 St. John i. 1.

THAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, That God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us[d].

Salome; his elder brother was James, not he who was surnamed "the Just," and who was the brother of our Lord, Matt. xiii. 55, Gal. i. 19, and the Son of Alpheus, Mark iii. 18. He, and his brother James, were named by our Saviour "the sons of thunder," Mark iii. 17, for their peculiar zeal and fervency for his honour, which we see manifested in St. John's sedulous assertion of our Lord's divinity. He was the most beloved by our Saviour of all his disciples, John xiii. 23. After staying some time with the blessed Virgin in his house at Jerusalem, to whose care by our Saviour she was committed, John xix. 27, probably till her death; he then travelled to preach the Gospel in Asia; but some say she accompanied him to Ephesus. But however, that he preached in Asia Minor, the best writers of antiquity allow, and he was probably the founder of the seven churches, Ephesus, Smyrna, &c, mentioned in his Apocalypse, Rev. i. 4. From Ephesus he was carried prisoner to Rome, upon account of the doctrine he taught, some think, from a malicious accusation of Ebion, others of Apollonius; and this in the year of Christ 92. There he was condemned to be thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil, but, being miraculously preserved, came out from thence alive. Afterwards he was banished into the island of Patmos, one of the Sporades, where he wrote his Revelation. He was afterwards by Nero the emperor recalled from his banishment, and then returned to Ephesus, where he reclaimed a young man, his former convert, relapsed into a dissolute course of life. He wrote his three Epistles to confute the heresy of Basilides, and other hereticks, who denied the divinity of our Saviour. Last of all he wrote his Gospel, to supply the omissions of the other Evangelists, some few years before his death. He survived till the reign of Trajan, and died above ninety years of age. *Dr. Nicholls.*

We celebrate this day the memory of St. John the Evangelist, who, being Christ's "beloved disciple," or "the disciple whom Jesus loved," that leaned on his bosom, and was admitted to the more private passages of his life, fitly accompanies the festival of our Lord's nativity.

The Collect for the day beseeches God's grace upon his Church, that it may duly profit by the doctrine of this blessed Apostle and Evangelist. The Epistle contains the matter, the reason, and the end of his writing his Epistles, which were all designed for the good and benefit of the Church. The Gospel, after mentioning our Lord's final charge to St. Peter, records a remarkable conversation that passed between our Saviour and him concerning St. John, in which our Saviour obscurely intimated, that the disciple should not die till the dissolution of the Jewish polity, a prophecy which history records to have been punctually fulfilled. This conversation is followed by a declaration concerning the truth of the Gospel written by the apostle. *Dr. Hole, Dean Stanhope, Shepherd.*

[d] Let the considerations, arising from this passage of Scripture, be so laid together, that the result of them all may be that fulness of a solid and well grounded j which the apostle of this day designed the words; f

The Gospel. St. John xxi. 19.

JESUS said unto Peter, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, That that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose, that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written[c].

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whence they have been taken, should diffuse, through every soul that receives them. Let us hold in highest *estimation that privilege*, which is indeed inestimable: the mystical union with God the Father and his blessed Son; the most valuable ingredient of a believer's both present and future happiness, and therefore the best ingredient of his present, because the earnest and undoubted pledge of his future and eternal. But let us consider withal, that to be united to God supposes a likeness to him, in all those excellencies that are imitable by creatures: and in all those proportions to which such creatures, as we, can raise our poor imperfect and still sinful selves: for such, we must remember, we yet are, even after our most sincere, our most successful endeavours to be holy. And therefore, as we must not presume upon the promises and love of God, "without cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in his fear:" 2 Cor. vii. 1: so neither must we forget, that all our cleanness is from "him, who hath washed us in his own blood;" Rev. i. 5; that humility, and taking shame for our sins, and acknowledging our own unworthiness, as they are most suitable to our circumstances, so are they most for our advantage: there being no instance which does more remarkably than this, of recommending to the favour, and entitling to the mercy, of God, make good that maxim of our blessed Master, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," Luke xiv. 11.

And, if these considerations, and their effects, can be more seasonable at one time than another, is there any fitter opportunity for them than the festival we now celebrate? when the beloved disciple does, as it were, again lean on his Lord's breast; and join our praises for the virtue of the servant, with our adorations for the birth of the Master? that birth, which was so circumstantiated, as to intimate how detestable sin and sensuality is to him: that birth, which "manifested the life," till then "hid in God," that we might thenceforth live in, and by, and to him: that birth, which is so full of confusion to the proud and arrogant; to those that do not, or that will not, see their vileness and frailty; but so full of comfort and holy trust to the penitent and the humble. For them, that feel and acknowledge their own misery and pollution, this new-born Saviour will cleanse by his blood; them, that lament and labour against their own infirmities, he will assist and strengthen by his grace. Let us then cast ourselves entirely upon Him, who, had he not loved us, would neither have taken nor shed his blood for us. Approach him as your only trust and refuge; for in what else can you place your confidence? not in men, though they may appear to be something, for no "man may redeem the soul of his brother, or make atonement unto God for him," Ps. xlix. 7. Not in yourselves, whom you may soon know to be nothing: nothing at the best, since all the evil in you is worse than so, and all the good is no better than so. For, though you "have laboured" ever so "abundantly," still "it was not you, but the grace of God that is in you:" 1 Cor. xv. 10: a grace given to the humble; a spiritual sustenance, of which the "poor in heart shall eat and be satisfied, and their soul shall live for ever;" while the conceitedly rich and full, the men who think they want it not, though then they want it most, shall be sent empty away. Shut not then the door of mercy against yourselves, by false notions of your own righteousness: but give the glory of your cleansing to that inestimable blood, which alone can take away sin; and be careful so to value the blessing, as never to forfeit again that fellowship, into "which the Father and his Son Jesus Christ" hereby vouchsafe to receive you. A fellowship of holiness here, but that, alas! imperfect, and too often interrupted; yet this to be completed in a fellowship hereafter in heaven, of happiness immutable, endless, and inexpressible. Whither God of his infinite mercy bring us in his due time, to whom be honour and glory henceforth for evermore. Amen. *Dean Stanhope.*

[c] From Christ's calling upon St. Peter and the other disciples to leave all and follow him, we may learn the great lesson of self-denial, and be encouraged to follow him in the rough as well as the smoother ways of our duty. To approve ourselves his disciples we must be willing to accompany him in his sufferings, as well as to partake of his glories; and to follow him to the cross, if we mean to follow him to a crown.

2. From Christ's checking St. Peter's curiosity about the time and manner of St. John's death, we may learn to avoid all idle and curious questions about matters which concern not us to know. To all those busy and

The Innocents' Day[f].

The Collect.

O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings[g] hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths[h]; Mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by thy grace, that by the innocency of our lives, and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Ps. viii. 2. Matt. ii. 16. Rom. viii. 13. Col. iii. 5. Rev. xiv. 4, 5. Heb. xii. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 20. John xxi. 18, 19.

For the Epistle. Rev. xiv. 1.

I Looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's Name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts,

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inquisitive persons, who pry into things which do not belong to them, the rebuke addressed by our Saviour to St. Peter is applicable, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

3. This discourse may rectify the mistake about St. John's death: for from that saying of our Saviour's, "What if I will that he tarry till I come," there was a common fame spread abroad, which obtained among the antients, that he died not at all, but was translated. Others from that report believed, that he only lay asleep in the grave, and that he alone of all the apostles was to live till Christ's second coming to judgment. All which was without any foundation, for St. John himself, in recording the matter, declared the sense of our Saviour to be otherwise; and the history of his death in the days of Trajan, hath abundantly confuted that mistake. *Dr. Hole.*

Lastly, the declaration, with which St. John concludes, concerning the truth of his Gospel, being as he was our Lord's inseparable attendant and companion during his ministry, is a solid foundation for our faith and gratitude. Let us then thankfully receive the light, with which it hath pleased God to enlighten the church by the doctrine of this holy Apostle and Evangelist. Let us bless him for the abundant evidence which he hath given us to the truth of our holy religion and the excellencies of its divine Author. Let us study with diligence the most faithful records of his most holy life; and search for the treasures of wisdom in his heavenly discourses. Let us improve, by what we do or may know here, in holiness of conversation; and wait with patience and humble hope, for the ravishing discovery of that hereafter, which as yet is unattainable. So shall we pay true reverence to the memory of those saints, by whose labours we have been instructed, when we at once dwell upon their books, and live by their examples: so, be sure to obtain the seasonable requests, in which, with a charity large as his, whom we commemorate this day, we beseech God "of his mercy so to enlighten his church with the doctrine of this blessed Apostle and Evangelist," St. John, that every member of it "may so walk in the light of his truth, as at length to attain the light of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen. *Dean Stanhope.*

[f] *The Innocents' day.*] The Collect for this day reminds us, with an allusion to the 8th Psalm, how God by means of little children can promote his own glory; and thence teaches us to pray that we may glorify him by the mortification of our vices, by the innocency of our lives, and the constancy of our faith. The Epistle contains a vision of St. John, wherein was represented to him something of the glories of heaven and the felicities of a future state; of which, because suffering infants may be partakers, as well as adult persons, the passage is appointed to be read on the day of their remembrance. The Gospel acquaints us with the manner of our Saviour's preservation from the ambitious rage and cruelty of Herod; who fearing the shaking of his throne by the birth of a new-born King, sought to slay him in his infancy, that he might secure himself in the kingdom. *Dr. Hole.*

[g] —*who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings* &c.] The authors of this Collect followed the common interpretation of Matt. xxi. 15, 16; and supposed that the "babes and sucklings, out of whose mouths God had perfected praise, or ordained strength," Ps. viii. 2, were certain "young children," who cried in the temple "Hosannah to the Son of David;" and that he caused himself and his only-begotten Son to be greatly glorified thereby. The Church notices the passage in this Collect; not that the infants, murdered by Herod, did with their mouths glorify God: but because on this day, when we commemorate the death of so many infants slain for God's glory, the Church was willing to observe another instance, wherein God's glory was greatly promoted by such as have been supposed young children. *Dr. Bennet.*

[h] —*madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths*] The infants slain by Herod's command did therefore glorify God by their deaths; because the murder of them on account of the incarnation of our Lord, whose life was principally intended to be taken away, tended to the promotion of God's glory, inasmuch as he secured the holy Jesus in a miraculous manner from the rage of that tyrant, and thereby caused that prophecy concerning our Saviour, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son," to be exactly verified in our Saviour, Hos. xi. 1. Matt. ii. 15. *Dr. Bennet.*

and the elders; and no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins: these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: these were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God[1].

The Gospel. St. Matth. ii. 13.

THE Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child, and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth; and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the

[1] *In* this passage we have a glimpse or imperfect representation of the future joys and glories of heaven: which are enough to quicken our appetite and desires after them, though not to satisfy our curiosity about them. "It doth not yet appear," saith St. John, "what we shall be:" for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what great things God hath prepared for them that love and fear him;" only we know that we shall be "like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John iii. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 9. We shall live for ever in his presence, and be delighted with the incessant praises and hallelujahs sung "to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore." 2. We learn from this discourse the qualifications of the persons that will be received into those unspeakable joys. And they are such as are "pure in heart," and keep themselves "unspotted from the world;" for heaven is the mansion of peace and purity, where no discord or defilement enters. Again, they are such as are true followers of Christ and "follow the Lamb wherever he goes;" not declining the ways of virtue for any difficulties they meet with in them, but being faithful unto death, and "resisting even unto blood, striving against sin." *Dr. Hole.*

The passage, thus proposed by the Church to our meditations as the Epistle for this day, contains some things not improperly applicable to those infants in particular, whose barbarous murder by Herod was made instrumental to the glory of him for whom they died. For they, in the most literal sense, "were not defiled" with sensual pleasures, who left the world in "virgin" innocence. They were most truly "redeemed from among men," whose early translation to a state of bliss and security prevented the hazards and temptations of a corrupt age. They were, strictly speaking, "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb," who began to shed their blood, in the cause of a new-born Saviour, and were the first fruits of the martyrs themselves. By this earliest experiment of cruelty against his blessed Son, it pleased God to demonstrate, how vain all future attempts of his enemies should be, whose implacable and bloody malice laboured to destroy this hated king of the Jews, either in his person or his members: and that such wicked designs should have no other issue, than those of this day; disappointment and vengeance to the inhuman contrivers, happiness and reward to the innocent sufferers, and increase of honour to the Person, in whose cause they suffered. Thus Herod shortly after lived and died a remarkable monument of the divine justice, and perished by a complication of plagues, as amazing as the unparalleled crimes, that drew them down upon him. Thus these tender plants, cut off in the bud, sprang up again and flourished; and bore such fruits, as their circumstances were capable of; the confession of their blood, though not of their tongues: by which they and their memory are blessed. And thus the blessed Jesus, after sojourning in a strange country, returned to enlighten his own with that doctrine, which, from the very first setting out of its author into the world, was manured with blood, grew under persecutions, and, by the fate attending it, proved, that to die in its defence was not to lose a life, but to save it. This is in truth the quickest and surest passage from death unto life: from a life, in the midst of which we are in death; to a life, which is so indeed: life immortal, and full of glory. To which God of his infinite mercy bring us, for the sake of his dear Son and our only Redeemer, Jesus Christ. *Dean Stanhope.*

prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not[k].

The Sunday after Christmas-day[l].

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of

[k] We shall do well to improve and apply the circumstances of this festival in the following manner.

1. The flight of the Son of God into Egypt, who was able to preserve himself from danger, may teach us, how lawfully we may flee from those dangers, which we cannot otherwise avoid. It is a thankless fortitude, to offer our throat unto the knife. He, that came to die for us, fled for his own preservation, and hath bid us follow him: "when they persecute you in one city, flee to another." We have but the use of our lives, and we are bound to husband them, to the best advantage of God and his Church.

2. It was warrant enough for Joseph and Mary, that God commands them to flee; yet so familiar is God grown with his approved servants, that he gives them the reason of his commanded flight: "for Herod will seek the young child, to destroy him." What wicked men will do, what they would do, is known unto God beforehand. He, that is so infinitely wise to know the designs of his enemies before they are, could as easily prevent them, that they might not be; but he lets them run on in their own courses, that he may fetch glory to himself out of their wickedness. *Bp. Hall.*

3. The dismal effects of Herod's ambition and rage should warn us always to behave ourselves with temper and moderation. Especially that we do so, when our enemies, or those that provoke us, lie at our mercy. Greatness and wealth are apt to turn our heads: but the effects of insolence to their brethren are never more deplorable, than when men have the temptation of power, to crush those despised things that lie below them. Of all persons, therefore, anger is least proper for princes, who can scatter death and desolation with a word of their mouths. And, in proportion, it must misbecome all superiors to their inferiors: because this passion generally spurs men on, to do the utmost they can do; and men are scarce ever very angry, without being very unjust. It is fit then this unthinking, unruly evil, should be held in with bit and bridle: and, the less any man's condition restrains him, from making his resentment of tragical consequence to others; the severer restraint, and more steady government, ought such a man to keep over himself.

4. The steps, taken by Herod, toward this desperate wickedness, should particularly deter us from hypocrisy and dissimulation. But, above all, from that most impious instance of it, the pretending of religion for a cover to any unlawful and devilish contrivances. For I cannot but think it proper to observe, that the next thing we hear of Herod, after his dissembled intention to come and worship Jesus, when his real intent was to kill him, is the barefaced butchery of this day. And thus it often happens. Men find a formal show of religion cannot compass those ends, which it was put on to serve, or to disguise; and then they presently throw off the mask, and lay aside all shame, all manner of regard for God and their duty. Nor is it indeed much to be wondered at, that those wretches should be given over to the blackest of crimes, and most fatal of all delusions; who have sinned against their best remedy, and prostituted the very ordinances of God to an artifice for rendering themselves more successful, in carrying on the service of the devil.

5. We should hence be disposed to entertain with patience and much meekness, not only the sufferings laid upon us by God's immediate hand, but likewise those, which we endure from the wrongful dealings of wicked and unreasonable men. The injustice cannot, in this case, be greater than Herod's, nor can our innocence be more than that of those infants. Since then we are taught by this example, that persons, the most inoffensive and undeserving, may be persecuted even to the death, without any just reflection, either upon their own virtue, thus oppressed, or that Providence which permits it to be so oppressed: our method in this case should be, to take sanctuary in the peace of a good conscience; to look up with a holy resignation of mind to the wise Disposer of every event; and to trust his mercy, for the necessary comforts, the abundant compensation, of all the hardships he sees fit for us to undergo. Which yet we should not undergo at all, were it not more for his honour, nay, more for our advantage, to have it thus than otherwise.

6. The remembrance of Herod's disappointment should quicken, and establish, our hope and faith in God. When dangers hem us in, and our "enemies on every side thrust sore at us that we may fall," then let us call to mind, that He, who rescued his own Son, can never want means to deliver any son or servant of his, when such deliverance is seasonable and proper. But temporal deliverances are not always seasonable, not always most beneficial. And therefore our chief and most earnest desire should be, that we may find his assistance and protection always at hand, to support us in our spiritual encounters. For let our present difficulties be what they will, all will certainly be well at last, provided he do but grant the petition offered up to him this day; that is, "So to mortify and kill all vices in us, that by the innocency of our lives, and the constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify his holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen. *Dean Stanhope.*

[l] *The Sunday after Christmas day.*] This Sunday hath the same Collect with Christmas day; and the Epistle and Gospel treat about the same business, the birth of Christ; for we have not yet done with the solemnity of Christmas. Thus great solemnities have some days after them, to continue the memory of them, as a prorogation of the feast. *Bp. Sparrow.*

It was a custom among the primitive Christians to observe the octave, or eighth day after their principal feasts,

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLICK.

THE beauty, the usefulness, and the scriptural and primitive simplicity of the Liturgy, which the Church of England has provided for the edification of her members, generally as they are acknowledged, are the more deeply felt, and the more calculated to produce their due effects, in proportion as they are better understood.

To contribute by the divine blessing to these most desirable ends, the work, now offered to the Publick, has been undertaken.

For this purpose, the harmony, which pervades the entire services of the Church, will be pointed out, together with the fitness of the several parts, and the relation which they bear to each other: those particulars also, which appear to require illustration or explanation, will be illustrated or explained.

The rubricks, or rules for the conduct of the minister and congregation, with respect to the performance of divine worship, will be examined, their propriety will be stated, and the observance of them inforced by arguments from Scripture and from reason.

Observations of a practical nature will be interspersed, in order to fix attention upon the effect, which the services of the Church should produce upon the heart and behaviour, both in the seasons of religious exercise, and in those of our ordinary occupations. Suitable reflexions will therefore be made on the devotional and other parts of the daily services and the occasional offices of the Church: but more especially to each Epistle and Gospel will be annexed a short comment, sometimes by way of exposition, but most commonly in the form of a practical application. A similar course will be pursued with respect to the Psalms.

One of the highest and most distinguishing excellencies of our Book of Common Prayer is its conformity to holy Scripture. That conformity will be continually specified. But, as a constant adduction of the texts of Scripture, which have supplied the sentiment or language of a prayer, would much increase the bulk of the notes, it has been judged better in many cases to be content with references; which, for the greater convenience of the reader, will be placed at the side of the text, after the manner of the marginal references in the Bible.

Although the word of God, as contained in holy Scripture, is at all times the foundation of our liturgical provisions, a large proportion of our prayers has been transmitted from the primitive or from early ages of the Christian Church. These sources will be noticed, as they severally occur. The compositions also of more recent date will be assigned, each to its proper period.

By these means it is presumed, that a body of notes upon the Book of Common Prayer may be formed, so as to convey much beneficial and interesting observation.

It is not however proposed that the notes should be original. Much valuable matter on the several topicks, that have been enumerated, is contained in the works of approved English divines; although there is not any one perhaps, which embraces the several objects, or exhibits them in the manner, now proposed. From these works the materials of the projected publication will be taken, each extract being faithfully ascribed to its author. The selection and arrangement of the materials is the only praise, to which the Editor aspires.

The work thus constructed will shortly be submitted with respectful deference to the candid acceptance and judgment of the Publick: not without an earnest prayer, nor without some degree of hope, that it may tend by the divine blessing to animate affection, and to confirm attachment, to the pure and apostolical branch of the Church of Christ established by God's good providence in this kingdom: and therewithal to encourage and promote the true, spiritual, and reasonable service of Almighty God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

East Hoathly Parsonage, Jan. 1, 1818.

CONDITIONS.

Three [illegible] will be handsomely printed on large and small papers, in Quarto, and will be published in Parts.

The Price of each Part on fine medium paper will be four shillings, and on royal paper eight shillings.

**** Part II. will be published on the first of May, and the succeeding Parts on the first of every alternate Month.*

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